



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

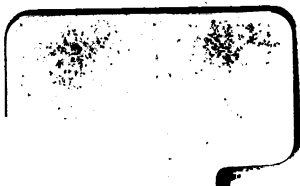
### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

HOPE ON  
HOPE EVER

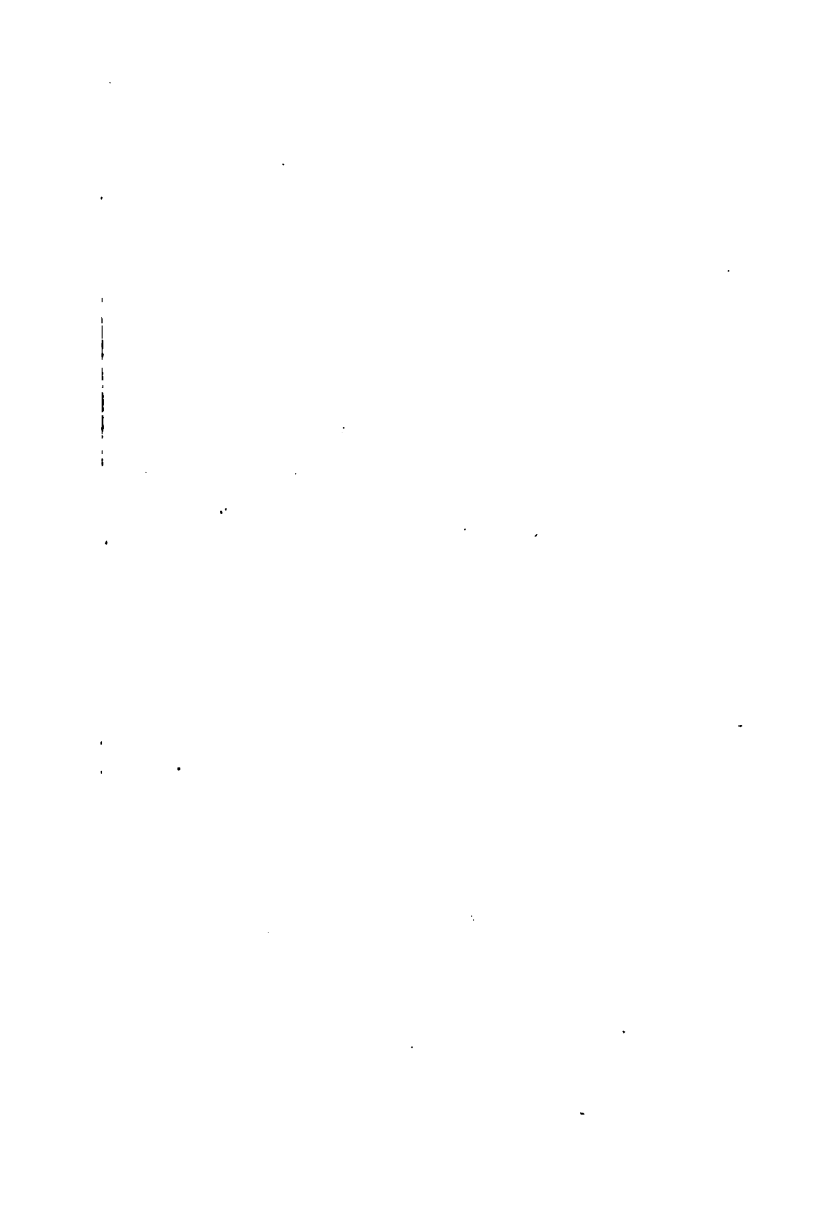
1840.

191.











**TALES**  
**FOR**  
**THE PEOPLE AND THEIR CHILDREN.**

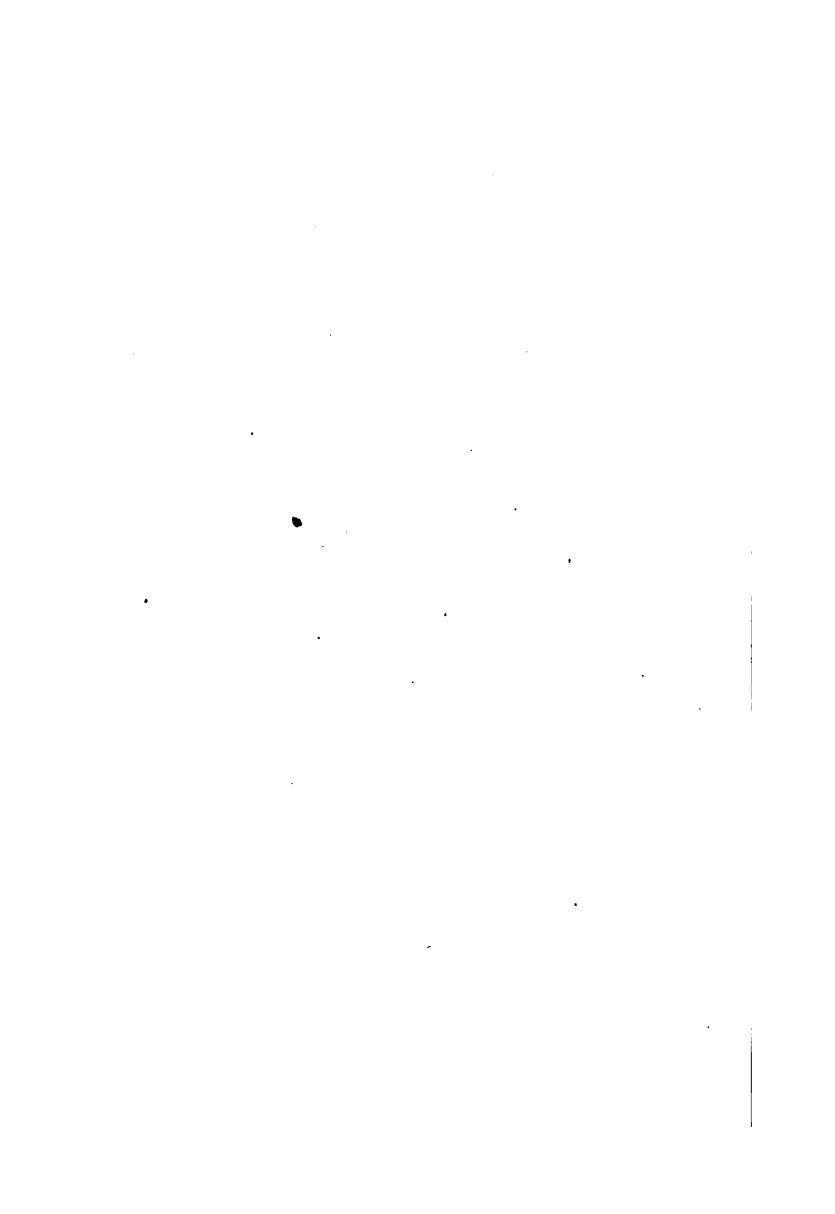
---

**BY MARY HOWITT.**

---

**(HOPE ON! HOPE EVER!)**









FRONTISPIECE.

HOPE ON, HOPE FEVER!  
A Tale.

BY MARY HOWITT.



LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR THOMAS TEGG, CHEAPSIDE.  
1840.



# HOPE ON! HOPE EVER!

OR,

THE BOYHOOD OF FELIX LAW.

---

BY MARY HOWITT,

AUTHOR OF "STRIVE AND THRIVE," ETC. ETC.

---

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY THOMAS TEGG, 73, CHEAPSIDE.

---

1840

191.



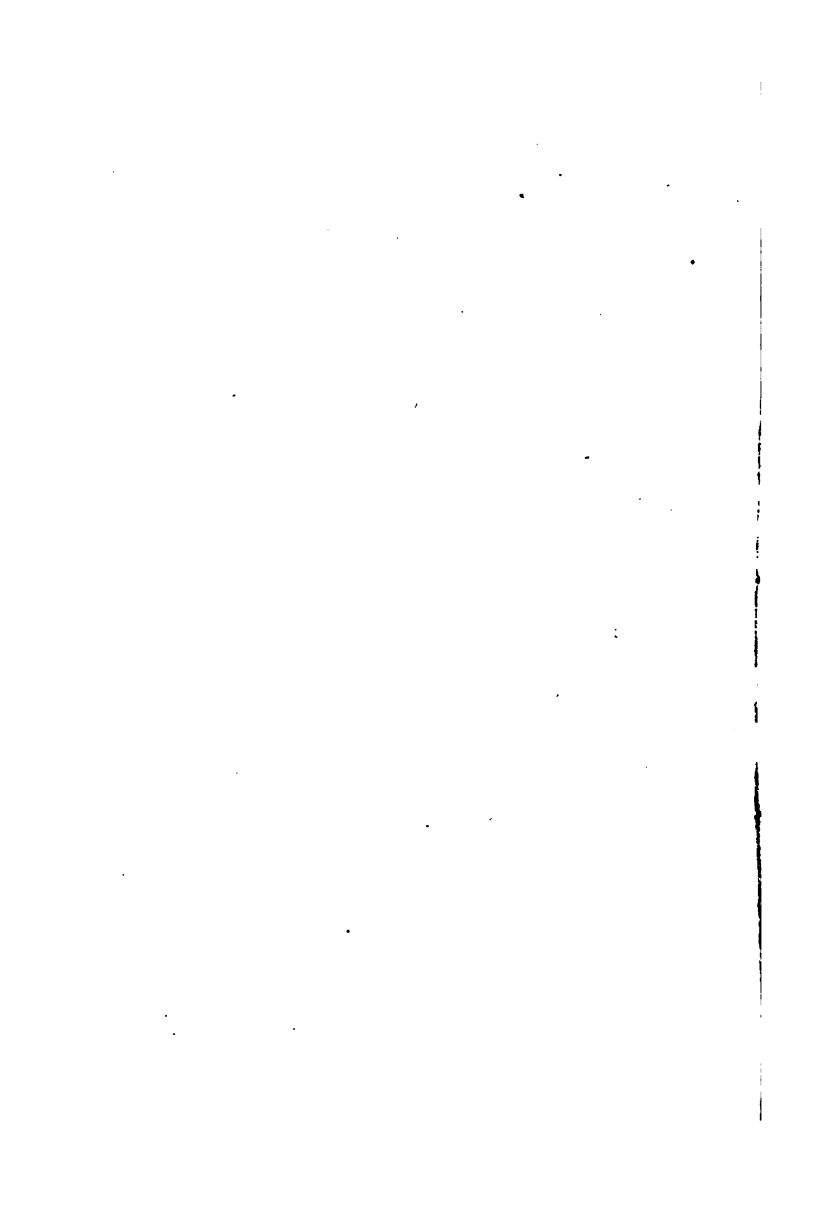
LONDON:  
BALNE BROTHERS, PRINTERS, GRACECHURCH STREET.

## CONTENTS.

---

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. A Peep into Dent-dale . . . .	1
II. Andrew Law, his Childhood . . . .	6
III. Andrew Law and one of his Scholars .	15
IV. The Event of an Evening . . . .	27
V. Andrew Law's Household . . . .	34
VI. A Removal . . . . .	44
VII. Felix Law . . . . .	55
VIII. The New Inmate . . . . .	67
IX. Mikky Hawes's Sheep-washing . . .	83
X. Mikky Hawes's Festival . . . .	91
XI. The Day After . . . . .	103
XII. Katie's Adventure . . . . .	109
XIII. Leave-Taking . . . . .	127
XIV. The First Part of a Long Journey .	143
XV. The Second Part of a Long Journey, and the Journey's End . . . .	153
XVI. The New Home and its Inmates . .	163
XVII. Much in Little Space . . . .	177
XVIII. A Stranger in London . . . .	190
XIX. The Stranger still in London . . .	199
XX. A Visit . . . . .	204





# HOPE ON! HOPE EVER!

OR,

## THE BOYHOOD OF FELIX LAW.

---

### CHAPTER I.

#### A PEEP INTO DENT-DALE.

OF all those romantic, out-of-the-world dales in the north-west of Yorkshire, where primitive manners and feelings still remain uncontaminated by modern fashions, none are more delightful in their local scenery, or more remarkable for the genuine old English hospitality and simplicity of character of their inhabitants, than the secluded little valley of Dent. The traveller upon the highroad between Kendal and Sedburgh, passes the lower entrance to the dale; but at this point it possesses no remarkable feature. The hills on either hand are low, and smooth to the top,

with an unvaried outline; and the river, or, as it is universally called, "the beck," which is the very soul of the valley, and which, in its higher and wilder parts, plays a thousand vagaries along its rocky and sinuous bed, and fills the air with its fresh, living voice, here runs on in silence, and with an unvaried course, as if it were needful to put on a grave air before its union with the broader and deeper Rawther, which, after an onward course of about two miles, discharges itself into the Lune. Advancing upward, the dale gradually becomes narrower, and the hills on either hand higher, and broken into the most diversified forms. The bed of the river also narrows and deepens, and its banks are thickly scattered with trees—here grouped together, and hanging, with deep shadows, over the water—and there interspersed with huge masses of rock, that jut into the river, lie athwart its bed, and give it at once the character of a mountain stream.

About midway in the valley lies its hamlet, called Dent-town—a Swiss-like village, embosomed in hills, with its picturesque houses, many of which have remarkably projecting roofs, and outside staircases, leading, by a little gallery, into the chambers; its low-spired church, or "kirk," as it is called, and

its old-fashioned endowed school, of which we shall have more to say anon.

The only road in the valley lies along the bottom, mostly following the course of the water, excepting where that course is too vagrant for the road, whose purpose is business, to follow. Like a playful child, who lets go the hand of an elder and graver companion, while he runs in chase of butterflies and flowers, and returns, when he is wearied with his sport—so proceed together, along the valley, the little river and the road.

The inhabitants of the dale lie scattered on the hill-side, on either hand, each homestead being generally erected beside one of those little rivulets, sykes, or gills, as they are here called, which, collecting among the bogs of the hill-tops, form themselves, here and there, into little streams, and have worn channels down the rocky hill-sides, diversified by occasional abrupt and picturesque falls, margined by trees, often from their highest descent. Nothing can be more delightful than these little streams, hurrying down with living voices, and waters as clear as crystal, each a willing tributary to the cheerful river of the valley.

As is the case in these dales, the good people of Dent-dale form a little world in

themselves. Each is mostly the proprietor of his own little section of the hill-side—that is, between rivulet and rivulet—they forming the natural landmarks of each demesne. Two or three fields, called “pasture-heads,” are generally enclosed and cultivated near the house, where oats, wheat, and potatoes are grown for family consumption; and the lower descent of the hill, down to the level of the valley, is used for grass and hay for their horses and cows; but the upper parts, called “the fell-side,” are all grazed by large flocks of sheep, geese, and wild ponies. Sheep, however, form the wealth of the valley; and their social sheep-washings and shearings make as blithe holidays as the harvest-homes, and the wakes and fairs, of other districts.

As the greatest sociality, and the most perfect good-neighbourhood, are kept up among the inhabitants of this simple district, there is as much visiting continually going on, as in more dignified and much gayer society. In order that the Dee—for such is the name of the river—may interpose no barrier to the intercourse of the opposite sides of the valley, which it otherwise would do in winter, (the great visiting time,) when the waters are swollen, it is crossed by many

little stone bridges—to say nothing of crossings formed in parts where it is shallowest, by stepping-stones—crossings infinitely preferred to any stone bridge whatever, by the children of the dale. Here, in hot weather, they may be seen, on their return from the school, dabbling about with their stockings and shoes off, catching fish, or hopping from stone to stone, and playing a hundred vagaries, any one of which would throw a city mother into hysterics.

Besides their small agricultural occupations, and the tending of their feathered and woolly flocks, the dales-people have another employment, which engrosses by far the greater portion of their time; this is knitting. Old men and young; women and children, all knit. The aged man, blind and decrepit, sits on the stone seat at the door, mechanically pursuing that employment, which seems as natural to his hands as breathing is to the lungs. The old woman, the parent of three generations, sits in the chimney-corner knitting, while she rocks, with her foot, the wooden cradle, in which lies the youngest-born of the family—the intermediate generations having their knitting likewise, which they take up and lay down as their daily avocations, whether in doors or out, require.

## 6      ANDREW LAW, HIS CHILDHOOD.

The little intercourse the dales-people have with the rest of the world, makes them almost unconscious of the singularity of this employment. For aught they know to the contrary, although a rumour of railroads, and steam-carriages, and power-looms, and wove stockings, has reached them, all the rest of England knit as much as they. There still is a demand, at Kendal, for their goods—caps, stockings, jackets, and shirts; and, though every one says the trade was better in their father's time, they still go on knitting, contented in the belief that, while the world stands, stockings and caps will be wanted; and, consequently, that the dales-people will always be knitters. Such is Dent-dale, and such are its people.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### ANDREW LAW, HIS CHILDHOOD.

As much as half a century ago, there was, among the homesteads of Dent-dale, one which could not fail of being particularly remarked. Like the rest, it stood above the level of the valley, beside a gill, or little water-course, called—for each had its dis-

tinctive appellation, which gave name also to the homestead—Linn's Gill; and thence the place was called Linn's Gill. In most other cases, the proprietor would have taken his name also from his place; thus, he would have been Andrew o' Linn's Gill; or, as his father before him had been Peter o' Linn's Gill—Andrew o' Peter's o' Linn's Gill; that is Andrew, son of Peter, of Linn's Gill. But, from causes which will presently be fully understood, he was more frequently called Maister Law, or "the good Maister at Linn's Gill."

But we have not said why Linn's Gill, situated as it was, like most other dale houses, built of grey stone, and with a slated roof like them, would yet attract particular attention. It was its general air of neatness; its trim garden, with carefully-clipped box-edging; its well-kept white wooden paling in front; its cheerful doorway, which, whether open or shut, seemed to invite you to enter; its bright, though small-paned windows, which, like kind eyes in a pleasant countenance, bespoke all right within. Peter Law, the father of Andrew, was, like the rest of the dales-men, the tiller of a few acres, and the possessor of a large flock of sheep; but things had prospered so well with him, that



he had, besides, his few hundreds in the bank, to which he made yearly additions, and became thus, in the eyes of his neighbours, a man of substance and consideration.

Peter o' Linn's Gill was a religious, grave man, and his wife was a fitting helpmate. He prided himself that he came of the stock of the martyrs; and the faithful account of that worthy ancestor who had perished in the flames for his religion, was penned, in small but careful caligraphy, in the fly-leaves of a large clasped Bible.

Peter Law had decided upon which of his few and distant connexions he should bestow his worldly possessions, and had made his will accordingly, when a son was born unto his own bosom. There was great rejoicing in the quiet hearts of Peter and Isabel Law over the child, whom they believed God had given them, to keep up, in their own line, the worthy race from whom they were sprung. Peter mounted his old horse, the day after the child's birth, and jogged quietly, and with thanksgiving in his soul, to the lawyer at Sedburgh, where he cancelled his former will, and disposed his worldly affairs in favour of this beloved new-comer.

"All in good time," said the lawyer, smiling at the old man's eagerness to endow a

new-born child, which the father confessed to be none of the strongest, with worldly goods which he might never live to possess. But Peter Law was the father of a living child, and his heart could only satisfy itself by bestowing upon it all it had to give.

"Weel, weel," said Peter, in reply, "if the bairn dee, which Heaven forbid! nae man is the poorer for it; but while he leeves, nane sal have a claim upon his right!"

The child at Linn's Gill was much less hardy than was common with the children of the dale. He was "fanted," (coddled,) and too much cared-for, said the neighbour good-wives; and many a knitting company was edified by histories of the flannel wrappers in which the child lay; and it was told, how the old wooden cradle, painted mahogany without, and blue within, which Isabel Law had kept in her garret for many and many a year, had been brought down, lined with wadded flannel, and actually curtained in front, lest a breath of air should visit the child too roughly. It may be questioned whether there were not more of a malicious curiosity to see how the Laws were mismanaging the child, than of good-neighbourly regard, in the visits which the gossips so frequently paid to their fireside; and yet, be it

understood, that the dales-people were not more malicious than the rest of the world—they only marvelled at innovations, inasmuch as innovations were unheard of in Dent-dale. The knitting parties therefore, which, through the winter, circulated from house to house, made the Laws and their young child a constant theme of discourse; all the more so because, since the birth of little Andrew—for so he had been called—neither of the good people of Linn's Gill had mixed with their neighbours, as formerly. Other good-wives took their young children with them, and laid them to sleep among blankets and pillows, which never were wanting for the purpose, upon the wooden seat or settle within the chimney-corner, at whatever house the sitting for that night might be. It was an unheard-of thing to excuse herself, as Isabel Law did, on account of the child; it was like cutting the whole neighbourhood at once; and the neighbourhood, therefore, thought it could do no less than scrutinize all they did, and censure it likewise.

But, spite of prognostications, the child lived; and, though of a delicate frame, walked and talked all in due time, to the amazement of the whole dale; and, what was more, he was a child of uncommon beauty and pro-

mise. To the hearts of the parents he was as an angel come down from heaven; and of an evening, when he was asleep, they talked over all he had said and done through the day; wept together, in the fulness of their heart-joy; laid out a thousand plans for his future life; returned thanks to God for this last and best of his gifts; dedicated themselves anew to his service; and then slept, in the joyful consciousness that their soul's best beloved treasure lay sleeping at their side.

It was the father's wish to make his son a minister of Christ. Other men worked hard, merely to endow their sons with worldly wealth, for the spending; Peter Law grew almost avaricious, that he might have wherewithal to qualify his son for the high calling to which he had destined him. The neighbours ridiculed such schemes, and told how, instead of putting needles, or, as they called them, "pricks," into his hand, and teaching him to knit, and thereby to earn a few pence a week, as was only right, he was set down to his book, to spell out what nobody could understand, while his old father and mother worked as if their lives depended upon gaining a penny. It would come to no good, they declared; and it was a pity, for he was a

## 12    ANDREW LAW, HIS CHILDHOOD.

sweet bairn, and a clever one—the very exciseman and the schoolmaster never saw his fellow!

Spite, however, of all that neighbours said, everything went on propitiously for the wishes of Peter and Isabel Law; and the time came at last, the time of their sorrowful anticipation, when the young scholar was to leave home, for better instruction than his own fireside could afford him. He was sent, therefore, to Sedburgh Grammar School. Young Law, however, spent his Sundays with his parents; the old man duly setting forth with his cart, every Saturday afternoon, to meet him on his way; taking care, however, to meet him so near the town's end, that he had not far to walk. Sunday was indeed a hallowed day at Linn's Gill; and the good neighbours having established it in their own minds, that Peter and Isabel Law must even have their own way, odd as it was, began, seeing that things did not fall out conformably with their expectations, to alter their mode of thinking, from sheer self-love. Accordingly, every one now declared that they had foreseen something extraordinary in the child; and then they grew proud of him, as being one of themselves. They forgave his parents that they had absented themselves

from their evening "sittings," and that the child had grown up under a system and a tuition so unlike their own. In consequence, how Andrew Law had looked, and what he had said on the last Sunday, came to be matter of discourse through the ensuing week.

Till the birth of this child, Peter and Isabel Law had been, in appearance at least, but little superior to their neighbours. They had acquiesced in their prejudices; they had conformed to all their habits of life, if not of opinion; but afterwards, the higher qualities and characteristics of their natures had been called forth. They felt that the destinies of at least one immortal being were in their hands, and they received the trust as one of the utmost moment, and vowed themselves to the righteous fulfilment of their duties. From that time they were altered beings; the fountain of love which had been opened in their hearts, though it seemed for awhile to separate them from their neighbours, in reality only extended and deepened their sympathies. They loved the whole human family, in the image of their child.

Tell me not of the trim, precisely arranged homes where there are no children; "where," as the good German has it, "the fly-flaps

#### 14     ANDREW LAW, HIS CHILDHOOD.

always hang straight on the wall;"—tell me not of the never-disturbed nights and days; of the tranquil, unanxious hearts, where children are not! I care not for these things. God sends children for another purpose than merely to keep up the race—to enlarge our hearts, to make us unselfish, and full of kindly sympathies and affections; to give our souls higher aims, and to call out all our faculties to extended enterprise and exertion; to bring round our fireside bright faces and happy smiles, and loving, tender hearts. My soul blesses the Great Father every day, that he has gladdened the earth with little children!

All this was felt in their heart of hearts, by the good people of Linn's Gill. From the day of little Andrew's birth Peter took a new interest in everything—in his garden, his home, his animals—for all had some reference to the child, or the child's happiness. While his age was yet only counted in weeks, the father thought of the time when he would toddle about and amuse himself in the garden and the fields; and hence, there was no garden, nor even any fields, so carefully kept in Dent-dale as those of Linn's Gill. The same principle also operated in the mother's heart. She loved her home,

because it contained her child, and was his birth-place: hence, there was no fireside so clean and cheerful, and no windows so bright and white-curtained, as theirs; for, always a good, notable housewife, as well as an excellent Christian, she felt, though she did not analyze her feelings, that the child's moral being would take its impress, in some degree, from common household things.

Such were the loving hearts that fostered the childhood of Andrew Law, and such was the home wherein he grew up to man's estate.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### ANDREW LAW AND ONE OF HIS SCHOLARS.

WE must now make a great advance in the time of our story, and, leaving Andrew Law in his childhood, return to him as a man of thirty. Only in one thing had Peter Law been disappointed in his son; he had not entered the church. He had been a poor scholar, it is true, at Cambridge, but he had not taken orders. His motives for declining, we are not, however, going to examine: and therefore now, instead of having the honour



of introducing him to our readers, either as vicar or rector, deacon or bishop, we must be content to make his farther acquaintance as the humble schoolmaster of Dent-dale. Having, therefore, just premised that Andrew's parents had now been dead a few years, we will not longer detain ourselves with preliminaries.

---

"Let me take the key, please maister!" said Johnny Swithenbank to Andrew Law, as, on an evening in October, they two stood at the school-house door, ready to walk together on their homeward way. "Let me take the key, please maister! and, as Molly Fearon is still so ill, I'll sweep the school-room in the morning before ye come: I won't lose the key;—and, please maister, I can sweep the floor and dust the desks," continued he, seeing the master still hesitated.

"Can you?" said Andrew, kindly.

"Yes, indeed, sir," replied Johnny, "I oft sweep the house at hame."

"Well, you shall, my child," said the master, and put the key into his hand, and then they walked on together.

Andrew Law loved the boy—he was his favourite scholar; and, with a glow of heart-

emotion, he grasped the little hand that held the key, till the pressure was painful. Johnny, however, said nothing, for he knew that his master loved him. He only quietly slipped the key into the other hand, and felt very happy.

"I have forgotten that specimen of campanula," said Andrew Law, suddenly stopping.

"I will fetch it for ye," said the scholar; "only tell me where it is; I have the key, ye knaw."

"It lies within my desk," said the master; "a dried flower, labelled and folded in writing-paper."

"I knaw it," returned the boy; and away he ran, while Andrew walked slowly forward. In less than five minutes he returned, and gave the dried specimen into his master's hand.

"Please, sir," said he, after a few moments' silence, "I should like to learn botany."

"And why not?" returned Andrew Law, "excepting that it is now too late for this season; but you shall begin with the new year."

"Thank ye," said the boy; "but I knaw a many flowers now, only with having walked so much with ye. What pleasant walks we

had in the lang days! I'm sorry winter's coming."

"Oh, but," said the master, smiling, "there is laking (playing) in the snow, and sliding, in winter."

"Yes, sir," said Johnny, but in a tone that did not evidence satisfaction.

"Then you don't like sliding and snow-balling?" asked the master.

"Yes, sir, I do," said Johnny; "but I like reading a deal better, and walking with ye better than all."

Andrew again took the boy's hand. "And what are you now reading?" asked he, after they had walked on a few moments in silence.

"I have finished the Iliad, and I am now reading the Odyssey;" and he took a little, old, worn copy out of the satchel he carried at his back, and opened its pages; "and I'm now reading about sailing past Scylla and Charybdis; and please, sir, there's a little Scylla and Charybdis in the beck."

"Is there?" asked the master.

"Down at Hell's Caldron," returned the boy; "I wish you would come and look at it sometime. Will you come to-night, maister?"

"Not to-night," replied the master; "but

there, now, run on and gather some blackberries for Tommy."

"Please, sir, I'll get some crabs for Gideon," said the boy; "he loves roasted crabs so: and we sal soon be at Green Well, where they grow so fine!"

"Do so," returned he; "be good and kind to poor Gideon, for he has but few pleasures; he cannot read like you, Johnny."

"No, sir," returned Johnny.

Gideon was a simple, harmless creature, his mother's cousin, who lived with them; and, as he was kind-hearted and gentle, though scarcely half-witted, the children were fond of him, and especially Johnny, who loved every living thing, but most what was weak and defenceless. When they came to Green Well, Johnny ran off, and, after he had gathered his cap half full, he rejoined the master, and they two walked on, till they reached the stile which led up from the road to Linn's Gill; and here the master stopped. The boy, who held the cap in his hand, stroked down his hair by way of bow, and bade his master good-night, adding, that he would be sure to get the school-room cleaned in the morning, before school-time. Andrew Law felt, he knew not why, an unusual affection for the willing, obedient boy, and he called

him back to repeat his benediction—"God bless you, Johnny, and good-night!"

Still Andrew lingered at the stile, watching him as he went on, with quickened steps; and still he watched, till a distant ascent of the road again brought him in sight. Here he again gathered something from the hedge-trees; some redder, riper crabs, perhaps, thought the master, for poor Gideon; and, as he seemed to see the eager, up-turned face, and the little ink-stained hands, an unspoken blessing was warm in his heart. Higher up the valley, the river was again in sight, with a stepping-stone crossing, just above that wild part of the river called Hell's Caldron, which Johnny had mentioned. Andrew thought he would wait at the stile till he had seen him cross the stones, from which place the path to his father's house lay right up the fields, about as high on the opposite hill-side as Linn's Gill. But while the boy might be reaching this part of the road, the master's mind became occupied with years long gone by. It all came back to him, in a sort of golden sunshine—the time when he, too, was a boy, young, happy, and thoughtless, feeding his soul with the very aliment of love. Then the joy of all seasons at once came crowding before him; the green

spring-time, when the lambs were on the hills, which he went out with his father daily to number; the breezy freshness of the hill-tops; the careering showers that passed over, and the free, warm gushes of sunshine, which poured down between the edges of the spring-time clouds. He thought of the birds and the birds' nests, which he saw with admiring eyes, among the hard-stemmed ling of the fells, and in the hedges of the lower fields. The thought of the geese sitting to hatch under their little penthouses, and the broods of young, silky, yellow goslings, which were his mother's care and his own admiration; of the flowers of summer; the paddling in the rocky shallows of the beck; the hay-harvest; the sheep-washings, and the social sheep-shearings. What a heavenly garden of Eden seemed that sunny land of childhood, through which he had wandered; and in which now walked, gathering of its sweetest flowers, that child, for love of whom he had cast his thoughts thus backwards!

But the thought of the river, with its rocky shallows, recalled him to himself, and then he looked out to see if the small figure of the boy was to be seen at the river, which now shone out in the western sun-light. But he was not there; nor did he make his appear-

ance during the several minutes which the master remained looking out for him. He then recollected that he had been so completely absorbed, as to have taken no note of time, and he doubted not but he had reached his home long ere then. He therefore turned into his own path, picturing to himself how Johnny would be met, at his own door, by poor harmless Gideon, to whom the crabs would be so great a treasure; and how good Mrs. Swithenbank would set Johnny's porringer on the black oak table, ready for his supper, as soon as Gideon's quiet little chuckle announced his approach. Again that thought brought back his own childhood, when he, too, ever found the ready porringer on the black oak table, and his mother met him with a kiss, and stroked down his hair, after ever so short an absence. Something of the unselfish intensity of a parent's love had entered into his own heart, and he could now understand many an action, and many a motive, which lay far beyond the inexperience of a child; and though he could charge himself with no neglected duty, nor with any want of affection to his parents, while living, yet, now that the grave had closed over them for ever, he felt that there remained a debt of gratitude unpaid.

Andrew Law's was a kind and gentle spirit, and such thoughts as these fell heavy upon his heart; and, as he approached his own door, the thought of his solitary fireside spread an unwonted gloom over his countenance.

Yet Andrew's fireside was not quite solitary, for there was, as usual, the thrifty old woman whom, since his mother's death, he had established as his domestic care-taker. She had just laid down her knitting on the broad brick, which projected, slab-like, from the wall beside the fire, and was busied stirring up the fire on the hearth, as he entered, for she always began her operations as soon as she heard his step outside the door. The fire burned up cheerily, the kettle sung above it, and the little round stand, with the wooden tea-tray, was set out for the evening meal; yet still, Andrew Law felt unusually melancholy. "Why a! why a!" exclaimed the old woman, the first moment she cast her eyes to his face, "what ails ye, Maister Law? what bad news do ye bring?"

Andrew smiled, and assured her he had brought no news at all. She then told how the wool-buyers from Kendal had been in the dale, and how Dannel o' Foxcroft would not sell his wool, because he said it would rise in price; and how Christie o' Gibb's Ha'



had cleared off all his at the price that was offered. "And what will ye do with yours?" asked she, "for the woo-buyers will be here to morn."

Andrew's answer seemed to the old woman short-witted, and she replied, "Weel, weel, Maister Law, I knaw ye care neither for the buying nor the selling. Heaven help ye for a bairn in understanding! But ye'll like to hear what has happened to Matthey o' Rivelin?"

"And what has happened to him?" asked Andrew.

"Why, Matthey last night brought hame a young wife, out o' Garstel, all unknown to anybody—as bonny a lass as man would wish to gie his naeme tul; an a rare knitter!"

"Indeed!" said Andrew, roused at once into animation.

"Ay, and indeed!" returned the old woman, "Matthey's fireside, as ane may say, wanted warming. A dawley spot was the Rivelin, after the old folks' death, and Matthey did weel to bring a young wife tul it. A prime knitter is she! and a weel-grown, bonny woman into the bargain!"

"Matthey o' Rivelin kna's what's good for him," again pursued she, seeing Andrew relapsing into thought; "a varra weel-considering man is Matthey! He kna's that

winter neeghts are lang, and that twa par o' hands rid mair wark than ane. Ay, she's a bonny lass, and all Dent-dale is talking o' her. He met her at Sedbur' Fair, but he never thought it would ha been his luck to ha wed her, for she had foriver o' sweet-hearts! And Matthey has brewed a keg o' burtree-berry (elder-berry) wine, and has bought twa bottles o' red wine fro Sedbur', and has brewed twenty gallon o' strang drink. There'll be rare doings, I'll warrant them!"

Andrew Law, instead of questioning and cross-questioning the old woman, as he would have done had he not been naturally a silent man, sat imagining to himself all the happiness which would gather about his neighbour's fireside. The clean hearth; the bright fire; the cheerful, comely wife, always there to welcome him; the kindly dropping-in of neighbours, all sitting in a goodly circle, knitting and chatting the time away; the cordial glow of the crackling fire, warming the remotest corners of the house, and penetrating even to the back of the great wooden screen, pictured itself to his mind. Then, by a very natural reaction, his thoughts turned to himself, and he was not at all sure whether, spite of his superior knowledge, the balance of happiness was not on the side of his neigh-

hours. He did not knit, like them; and their "sittings," and their monotonous knitting-songs, and their dale-histories and country jokes, told over for the hundredth time, however delightful to them, had no interest for him; but then, the picture of his own fireside was not very alluring;—the fire low and ashy; the lamp untrimmed, and himself sitting, cold and solitary, with an open book before him, turning page after page, and reading, to be sure, yet with a void in his heart, which warm, generous, and unselfish love might very comfortably fill. He again thought of the little boy whom he had parted from on the road, and he wished he could make even that child the companion of his home.

Such were Andrew Law's thoughts, when the old woman, who was tired of so untalkative a companion, rolled up her knitting, without even getting to the middle of the seam-needle. She then put on her cloak and bonnet, and, lest the moon should be down on her return, took the lantern under her cloak, and walked out, to pass the evening with more companionable people than Maister Law; "wha," muttered she to herself, between the house door and the garden gate, "is a poor, maundering cretur, Heaven help him! for a' he's a gert scholar!"

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE EVENT OF AN EVENING.

WHILE Andrew Law sat pondering on many things, with a large, open book before him, from which, however, he never read a word; and while his old housekeeper was sitting in the midst of a knitting-company, and was edifying them with a history of Maister Law's melancholy housekeeping, which operated as a foil to the merry fireside of the Rivelings, where the bride, it was said, had already challenged to a knitting-match, any three of the best knitters in the dale; this while, good old Joshua Gilsland, a Moravian of Sedburgh, was driving homeward, from Settle, in a one-horse-chaise which he had hired, with a young kinswoman—Dorothea Zelter by name. Dorothea was the orphan daughter of missionary parents, who had died in South Africa, about six months before, leaving this, their only child, to the loving care of their English relative. They had met, for the first time, this day at Settle, and were now on their way homeward, but at a pace so slow, that it was doubtful if they could get further than Dent-town that night. As they approached that wilder part of the dale, where

the river flows through the Caldron, they were startled by the uneasy howling of a dog, the sound of which came up, dolefully mingling with the rushing and tumbling of the vexed and turmoiled waters.

As they advanced upon the spot, the animal sprung from the wilderness of trees and bushes, which grew on the rocky margin of the stream, and endeavoured, by all means in its power, to attract the notice of the strangers. It whined, and barked, and howled most piteously, and then ran towards the water. Its actions were not to be misunderstood; and the old man, giving the reins to his companion, followed the dog, which appeared overjoyed at his acquiescence. Having passed, not without difficulty, through the wildly-grown trees and brushwood of the river-side, he found himself on the immediate edge of a black abyss, which, in the uncertain shadowyness of the scene, appeared of vast depth, and, rising out of which, he could descry huge misshapen masses of stone, white and ghastly in the moonlight, while the roaring and rushing of the pent-up waters below, told it to be a place of no common danger. But good Joshua Gilsland had lived too long in the self-forgetting performance of Christian duty,

lightly to shrink from danger; and, hoping he might yet be in time to save life, he merely paused till he had assured himself of his footing, and then followed to the spot at which the dog made a stand, again howling, and again looking down into the stream. Fortunately, this spot lay in the full light of the moon, and the aged man could now, very distinctly, perceive a dark object lying in the still water of a sort of little pool, or rather huge rock basin in the hollow of a rock; in fact, called by the dales-people "the font," from an ideal resemblance to that object. That it was the body of a child, the good man had instantly no doubt; of a child, who had probably fallen in, face downward, while playing or scrambling about these wild rocks of the river. His clothes were scarcely under water; and, by lying down upon the rock, and leaning over the edge of it, with the help of his strong staff he managed to raise the body sufficiently to take hold of the shoulder and lift it out. Alas! good man, he knew not the burden of sorrow that he had lifted out of the pitiless water!

"Poor, dear lamb!" groaned he, as he turned the face into the moonlight, and saw the fair, meek countenance, and the drip-

ping locks; "poor, dear lamb! God has taken thee to his own bosom!"

The dog, who all this time had shown the utmost joy at the recovery of the body, leaped and barked, and ran forward, to indicate what path they were to take, when a stout countryman, at the very moment when Joshua Gilsland was considering what had best be done, made his way up to the spot. It was Matthew Fothergill, otherwise Matthey o' Rivelin, who, passing along the road, had heard from Dorothea Zelter of the cause which had taken her companion to the water-side, and had now come to render what help might be needful.

"It's Christie o' Gibb's Ha's dog!" said he, as the creature bounded towards him, recognising him at the same time, "and, as I live, this is Johnny Swithenbank! Poor lile bairn! and his bag o' books at his back!" said he, stooping down and gently raising the body. "But what did he here? this was no his way hame. He had na business here!" added he, impatiently.

"It was the Lord's will!" remarked the old man: "life and death are alike in his hands."

It was then arranged that the body should

be removed to Joshua Gilsland's chaise; and, while they with their melancholy burden took the cart-road to Gibb's Ha', which would oblige them to go half a mile round, in order to cross the river by the bridge, Matthey o' Rivelin should take the shorter foot-road, and prepare the family for their coming.

"Hae ye seen our Johnny to-neeght?" asked the good wife of Gibb's Ha', as she stood at her garden-gate, from Matthey o' Rivelin, while he was yet many paces from her. "Hae ye seen our Johnny?" repeated she, as Matthew was slow to answer.

"He's coming," was the neighbour's reply, at length.

"For what's he been staying? Not laking by the way, for sure; or has the Maister kept him in?"

"He'll soon be here," was the good neighbour's reply, but with that tremor of voice which prepared the mother for some intelligence of sorrow. When sorrow enters a house, how soon is its arrival felt! Even the footsteps of Matthey o' Rivelin, as he crossed the threshold, were as intelligible as the tolling of a knell.

"Some ill has happened him! Christie, go



for th' Doctor!" said Mrs. Swithenbank to her husband, who, with Tommy, the younger child, on his knee, was "supping his porridge" in the warm fire-light.

"Ye needn't go, Christie!" said Matthew, in a half whisper to the father, feeling that he could communicate the ill news better to him than to the mother. But the mother's ear caught the words, if not their full import. "Needn't he!" exclaimed she; "then, if he is na ill hurt, why not tell us sae at aince?—But oh, no!" added she, with a shrill scream the moment after, as Matthew's countenance interpreted his silence, "he's de-ad! he's de-ad! Oh my bairn! my bairn!"

Nothing could now equal the alarm and distress of the whole household; and poor Gideon, who had been asleep in the warm corner of the settle, and was awoke by the scream of the mother, was the only one, beside Matthew, who might be called calm. But poor Gideon was only calm because intelligence was received slowly and imperfectly into his clouded mind; and when Matthew called him aside and said, "Gideon, my man, run down to Maister Law, and bid him come here directly, Gideon silently rose and took down his old hat, wondering what

all this meant, and then, fixing his eyes on Matthew, stood as if he had forgotten, or failed to comprehend his mission.

"Tell him," said Matthew, drawing him outside the door, and speaking very distinctly, "tell him that lile Johnny's drowned, and he must come up here."

Poor Gideon's few faculties were affections, and the communication became at once fearfully intelligible. "Oh Johnny! Johnny!" cried he, with a voice of anguish that thrilled the heart of the stout dalesman, "Oh the dear bairn! Oh the lile bairn! Johnny! Johnny!"

"Run down, my man," said Matthew, fearing that Gideon's distress would disable him from executing his wishes, "run down and tell the Maister to come and see if he can bring Johnny to life!"

The false hope was enough to wing the poor creature to his utmost speed, and in a few moments neither the sound of his lamentations nor his footsteps were to be heard.

After Gideon was despatched upon his errand, Matthew returned to the house, whence he and Christian Swithenbank proceeded, by the longer road, to meet Joshua Gilsland and the body.

## CHAPTER V.

## ANDREW LAW'S HOUSEHOLD.

It was in this house of mourning that Andrew Law first saw Dorothea Zelter. In the midst of the intense anguish of that terrible time, when he saw the child he loved so well, and from whom he had so lately parted, lying dead before him; when the cap, half-filled with crabs, which had been found near the water, was brought in; and the bag of books laid on the table, and the key taken from his pocket—with every one of which some association of love and obedience was connected, and entwined, as it were, with the strings of his heart; when, in the tumult of his grief he groaned forth, "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken," yet failed to say, "Blessed be his name!"—even then he was conscious of a calm and heavenly countenance that beamed upon him, as it did on the other mourners, like an angel sent from heaven to bless and comfort them.

There are some whose mission in this world is love—who are sent from the throne of the Merciful, to administer mercy, and, like the blessed Saviour, whose disciples they emphatically are, to take the sting out

of sorrow and death. Such was Dorothea Zelter.

Andrew Law, who had ideas of female gentleness and grace superior to any reality which Dent-dale could produce, saw instantly that this young stranger, with her meek, Madonna-like beauty, her pity, her sympathy, and her Christian spirit, was the realization of all his dreams. Now he saw her weeping over the dead body of the child; now composing the sweet features to their everlasting repose, and now laying the small palms together on his breast. Now he heard her speaking such heavenly words of consolation to the heart-broken parents, as Christ himself might have uttered, and now soothing the younger child, who, terrified and half conscious of the presence of death, clung weeping, and refusing to be comforted, to the bosom of his mother, till, laid in the arms of Dorothea, he became pacified, nor would thence be removed, as if he felt that to be with her was to be full of assurance and peace. No wonder was it that Andrew Law blended together sweet thoughts of the dead and the living!

Need we say more to prepare our readers for the next event of our story? We think not.

Before the winter had fairly set in, An-

drew Law had such a companion by his fireside, as made him no longer think, with a feeling almost akin to envy, of the social gatherings, and the glowing fire, which warmed even behind the screen, at the Rivelin. The fireside at Linn's Gill was yet more happy, for Dorothea Zelter was the presiding spirit there. Her former life, spent among half-civilized people, and holy Christian men and women—a life of virtue, yet of sorrow, furnished engrossing conversation for many an hour. How delightful it was to hear her tell of those far foreign countries, with all their new aspects and productions—but still more, of her parents; till her husband felt, in the living description she gave of their persons, their way of life, and their affection for her, as if he too had known and loved them! Dorothea's parents had so named her, because she was indeed to them *the gift of God*; how much more did she seem so to the desolate heart and hearth of good Andrew Law!

The dales-people, who looked upon themselves as a little community all-sufficient for itself, would have resented any other of its young men bringing in a *foreign* wife—for all people dwelling beyond the range of the dales were called *foreigners* by them. Even

a wife brought from the town of Kendal, where they had dealings, was almost an unheard-of thing; but this marrying a stranger, a woman born beyond seas, would have been high crime and misdemeanour, had any other than Andrew Law committed it. But Andrew was a privileged person: he had been unlike them from his youth upwards; and, though his marriage made a great talk, none took offence; or, if they did take offence, they had only to look on the sweet, gentle countenance of Dorothea, and they straightway forgave it. And, besides this, the holy purity of her demeanour, and the gentle playfulness of her conversation, every word of which was a sentiment of religion and love, together with the rumours of the strange, foreign land whence she had come, and of her dead missionary parents, made them regard her as a being of a different and superior race. They revered her; and reverence is but love in another shape.

The sods had grown green on little Johnny Swithenbank's grave, and his mother had put aside, in one of the black, carved, oaken chests which belong to all dale-houses, her Sunday mourning, there to lie, among blankets and home-spun table-linen, till some future death again brought it into wear. The

second Christmas was at hand, and a family event of great interest was looked forward to at Linn's Gill.

It was now Christmas eve; the whole valley lay in a vesture of deep snow, which had gradually accumulated for a week, and had become hard and crisp, by nightly frosts, through that time. All nature was calm as a child's sleep, and the stars shone brightly overhead in a sky of intense blueness. But every fireside was a festival; and, had any traveller passed along the dale-road, he would not have failed to remark how, from every homestead on the hill-sides, lights shone, giving token of the good fellowship within. Within there were holly in every window-pane, and ivy and mistletoe depending from every ceiling. Neighbour was met with neighbour; scattered branches of families were collected together; and, for once, the knitting was laid aside for the "Christmas bread," and the brimming cups of "Christmas drink," which every fireside produced.

At the fireside of Linn's Gill there sat, that night, three people—Andrew Law, and his wife, and their good neighbour Alice Swithenbank o' Gibb's Ha'. There was no fireside in the dale brighter and cleaner than that: the fire went roaring up the wide

chimney, from the hearth, where a huge Christmas-log was burning, and the bright blaze was reflected in the pewter dishes which stood on the dresser shelves, on the opposite side of the room; there was sweet spiced-bread, and ale on the table, and red-berried holly in the window. The two women had a shallow basket between them, and were arranging sundry little garments, while a new wicker cradle, with its new little bedding and blankets, was airing in one warm chimney corner. Andrew Law sat in the other, with his fingers between the pages of the Gospel of St. Luke, where he had been reading of what happened in the little town of Bethlehem, more than eighteen hundred years ago.

The next morning, when the dales-people were wending their way to their parish church in Dent-town, all were busy talking of the news—how a child was born at Linn's Gill; and Nelly, the buxom wife of Rivelin, who chanced to have called there early in the morning, declared it to be "a bonny bairn, the vara pictur o' its mother."

The birth of Andrew himself had been a joyful event; but still more joyful was the birth of this child; nor could the hearts of the parents conceive anything wanting to crown



the abundance of their blessing. Never had a child seemed so beautiful to the eyes of its parents as did this; and, in the fulness of their joy, as well as after Dorothea's father, they named him Felix.

The Christmas holidays closed, and Andrew resumed his school duties; and, though Dorothea's recovery was slow, she once more went about her household work; yet, whatever they did, the blessed consciousness was still with them, that they were the parents of a child given them by God.

One thing, and one only, dimmed the happiness at Linn's Gill. Dorothea's health began to fail. Andrew, the most affectionate of human beings, watched her with a love that never was surpassed; but the truth was too strong to be denied; and yet, hope is the sheet-anchor of love, and so Andrew still hoped, spite of his fears. But the talk of the dales-people was, that the young mother at Linn's Gill was not long for this world.

"Methinks, dear husband," said Dorothea, one fine balmy Sabbath evening in May, as she and Andrew, with the child in his arms, were beguiled out, and rambled down the river side, towards that wilder part which had been fatal to poor Johnny Swithenbank, "Methinks God nullified the curse

by making children dependent on their parents' love. Eve's best earthly blessing, as it seems to me, lay outside the gates of paradise."

Andrew felt that his wife's words were true, and held the child still closer to his bosom. "And yet," he replied, half repelling the thought, as treason to his own boy, "her first born was Cain."

"Alas!" sighed Dorothea, "yet was not her love the less;—but why speak you of Cain, with that beloved one in your arms?"

"This beloved one," replied Andrew, cheerfully, in the words of the fine old carol, "was born on Christmas day in the morning."

"And was God's gift at that blessed time—a token of his dear love to us," replied Dorothea.

The evening was yet more delicious as they advanced up the valley, for, as the sun neared the horizon, the whole flood of its light was poured into the valley from an opening between the hills. The tender green of the budding trees looked yet more transparent, and the pale, starry tufts of primroses below, seemed like friendly faces looking upward from the earth, full of love and joy.

The blackbird and the thristle sang their sweetest songs, while the fall and rush of the river, in its troubled passage through the Hell's Caldron, sent forth a deep undertone, which mellowed every other sound, and harmonized with the scene.

It was one of those delicious Sabbath evenings when the rest of the hallowed time seems to fill all nature, and strikes deep into the human breast, like a sentiment of religion.

"I know not why it should be so," said Dorothea, "but the whole course of my earlier life seems at once brought before me. I feel as if the Sabbaths of my childhood were all concentrated in this one time, and as if I almost expected to hear my father's voice addressing his swarthy people under the shade of the palm-trees, and felt my mother's arm on my shoulder, as she pointed out the hymns, in that rich, wild tongue in which the native people sang praises to God! How strange! and I wake as from a dream, and find myself here, with thee, my beloved, and that dear child!"

Andrew Law looked into his wife's face, and saw that her eyes were full of tears. "Why are you sad, Dorothea?" asked he.

"Andrew," replied she, solemnly, "I will open my heart to you—I know that I have not long to live."

Andrew stopped abruptly, and looked at his wife, but said nothing, for his heart was too full; it was the first time Dorothea had spoken of her own death.

"I would fain live," continued she, "if so were the will of Heaven, for your sake and the child's; but it may not be. Thoughts of death, dearest husband, are with me night and day; and these strange visions of the past, this hearing and seeing my father and mother, come often, and can only be a heavenly token to prepare me for death. Yet be not broken-hearted, dearest husband," continued she, seeing Andrew utterly overcome by her words, "He who ordains this affliction, will strengthen us to bear it. And he has strengthened me; for I have feared it long; and night and day have prayed that this cup might pass from us; but it may not be. It is His will that we drink it, and a spirit of submission will be given!"

Dorothea's presentiment was true. The best medical aid was procured; but, though she was attacked by no decided malady, her illness was beyond the skill of physicians. As the summer came on, she gradually wasted

away; yet, as her strength decayed, the clear light of her heavenly spirit became more conspicuous.

It was a touching thing, to see this fair young mother preparing future clothing for her child, over which many a natural tear was shed; and, as it was finished, all laid carefully by, that, when she was mouldering in the grave, he might be wearing tokens of her forethought and love. But why should we prolong a melancholy part of our narrative? Dorothea Law died on the seventh of July, in the twenty-third year of her age, and was buried in a spot of her own choosing, in a sunny part of the churchyard of Dent-town.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A REMOVAL.

IF the fireside of Linn's Gill had seemed melancholy, after the death of the good old people, how much more must it have become so, after the death of Dorothea! It is impossible to tell the desolation of heart that then fell upon poor Andrew Law; and, though the whole dale sympathized with him, and many and many a kind neighbour-wife

volunteered to take charge of the child, he rejected all offers of help and pity. It was then hay-harvest, and consequently the long summer holidays, and he spent every moment of his time in caring for his child. It slept in his bosom by night, and was his only comfort and companion through the day. To the good dales-people all this appeared like insanity; and as he, with his melancholy countenance and slow steps, passed them in the road, cradling the child in his arms, they stopped and looked after him with expressions of pity and wonder. "The Maister is clean daft," said they, "poor soul! and yet the bairn thrives!"

And so it did. Andrew was the best of nurses; and wisely indeed had he taken upon himself this engrossing charge, for it furnished him with a perpetual object of interest: and though he often wept bitter tears when the child smiled upon him, or when he pressed his cheek with his soft little hand, yet the time at length came when he smiled also, and felt that, in the mirth of the child, he could even forget his own sorrow.

Poor Andrew Law, however, was never after the man he had been; and the whole dale was again amazed and scandalized, when he made it known that a new schoolmaster

might take his place, for he should not, henceforth, teach again. "What is he boun' to do?" asked many a dalesman, knowing that hitherto he had not looked much after his acres, and, moreover, that he could not knit. "What is he boun' to do?" But Andrew, this while, had his own plans, which, after due consultation with the good people of Gibb's Ha', were carried into effect.

Andrew knew, as well as his neighbours, that he had no turn for the management of land, nor for the keeping of flocks, whether sheep, geese, or ponies; and, though his home at Linn's Gill was hallowed by the memory of Dorothea, yet, for the child's sake, he determined to leave it, and become the inmate of some other family, where, though he would not give up the charge of the little Felix, he might have an experienced, matronly woman near him, to counsel with, if need were. The rent of Linn's Gill he knew would be sufficient for their maintenance. And thus matters were arranged; and the next news in the dale was, that Andrew Law and the child had, in dale-pharse, "taken the house-end at Gibb's Ha;" that is, that the little parlour at Gibb's Ha', with the chamber over it, were allotted for their use.

Mrs. Swithenbank, good woman, was well

pleased with this arrangement, for she had no doubt but Andrew would instruct her two boys, seeing he was so fond of Johnny; and thus the family would be benefited by the saving of school-wage; "to say naething," observed her husband, when this thrifty consideration was mentioned to him, "o' his paying a penny a-week to th' newspaper, and reading it out into th' bargain." A matter of no small moment that, for Andrew read remarkably well, while poor Christian Swithenbank spelt or guessed at every fourth word.

The dales-people, who thought it their duty, as we have before said, to pass judgment on the movements of any of their community, and who had the best opportunities in the world for so doing, at their winter evening sittings, and their summer harvestings and sheep-shearings, saw nothing to disapprove of in this junction of the households of Linn's Gill and Gibb's Ha'. "Naething could be mair likely," said they, seeing that Alice o' Christie's, (that was, Christian Swithenbank's wife,) was the only dales-woman Mrs. Law had ever been intimate with. It was on the night of Johnny's death, that she and Andrew had first met; Alice o' Christie's had been with her at the birth of her child, when, Mrs. Law being a foreigner,



with all sort of new-fangled notions, had objected to the regular custom of "a shout," (that was, a gathering of the good wives on the occasion,) and had contented herself with Mrs. Swithenbank; whereby, to be sure, her wife-day, (or second Sunday after the child's birth, when she sate to receive company,) had been lightly attended, and the child, in consequence, had few presents. Moreover, Mrs. Swithenbank had been with her at her death, and had been at the laying of her out, and seen the shroud she herself had made; and had had the overlooking of her clothes—certainly unknown to her husband—and been able, thereby, to make known how she had cut up her own linen, (and such linen, to be sure, as had never been seen in Dent-dale,) to make future under-garments for the child, one size after another—and so beautifully made—so that he would not want for years. All this was known to Alice Swithenbank, who had, besides, been shown, by poor Dorothea herself, two oil portraits of her parents, done by a Dutch artist; and sundry habiliments of a foreign fashion, which had been worn by them, and some ancient china and plate, of a quality and fashion unknown in Dent-dale; together with good store of beautiful house-linen; all of

which, she said, was kept carefully under lock and key, in a large foreign-looking chest, which stood at Dorothea's bed's head. Such being the degree of intimacy which subsisted between the two wives of Linn's Gill and Gibb's Ha', nothing could be more proper than that Andrew, now he was bereaved of his wife, and left with that young child, should take the house-end, and thus become an inmate of the family.

"Naething could be mair likely," was universally decided, at the great sheep-shearing supper at the Rivelin, when this affair was, of course, talked over. And then it was told, how some had seen Christie's cart fetching Andrew Law's goods and chattels, which, however, were only few in number—a bed, a cradle, and sundry chests and oaken presses, being the principal—to say nothing of his books, which, though in the estimation of the scholar very few in number, were a library, in the eyes of the dales-people; and the two oil portraits, which were now inestimable treasures, because he traced a resemblance to his wife in both of them. And then another related, how poor Andrew himself, with the infant in his arms, had been seen going out of the house for the last time, and how he had returned three several times, as

if he had forgotten something, but it was only in the grief of leaving the old place where he had been born, and where his wife had died. Others then told how he had been seen at his wife's grave in the twilight, and all attested that there never had been such a couple in the dale, and that it was a thousand pities she had died; for, though she was a foreigner, and had many new ways of her own, she never had any one's ill word. It was, indeed, a thousand pities, for poor Maister Law would never hold up his head again; that he was quite another man now; that it was a great misfortune to the dale, his giving up the school; and that, had he not gone to live with such a comfortable, well-doing family as that of Christie o' Gibb's Ha', he might have been found dead in his bed some morning, or have maundered about, with that baby in his arms, till he had no more wit left than poor Gideon himself.

It was in the autumn that Andrew Law removed himself to Gibb's Ha'. Alice Swithenbank, who was a kind-hearted neighbourly woman, anticipated very great advantage from her new inmate. Although she acknowledged him for a prodigious scholar, and had formerly stood in awe of him, she had been on such friendly terms with him

since poor Johnny's death, as to have outgrown the fear of his learning. She thought only now, how he would be always at hand to talk with, when the good man was from home, and how he would sit in the chimney-corner, of a night, and perhaps take to knitting quite kindly; "and, if he would only do that," said she, to her favourite gossip, Nelly o' Rivelin, "why, then he would soon get the better of all his trouble, for it was wonderful how soon sorrow left the heart when the pricks (knitting needles) were in the fingers."

But good Alice o' Gibb's Ha' reckoned without her host; and it must be confessed that she felt herself ill used when Andrew lit the fire in his little parlour; placed the cradle within reach of its warmth; undressed the infant himself; rocked it to sleep, and then lit his candle and sat down to his book; "as if," said the good wife to her husband, that same night, on his return from Settle Fair, "we were nane o' us good enough for his company."

Had Andrew called upon Alice Swithenbank every hour in the day, for hand-help and for counsel, and had he required her to dress and feed the child, she would have been much better pleased, than by this inde-

pendence of all help. To find him up in the morning as early as herself, with the baby dressed, and fed, and wrapped in his poor mother's cloak, ready to go out in the open air; to ask nobody to carry him out, nor even to hold him in their arms; to take his meals with him on his knee!—it was a thing beyond anybody's experience; and, for aught she could see, he might just as well have remained by himself at Linn's Gill! Poor Mrs. Swithenbank, she was indeed dissatisfied and displeased. Andrew Law all this time never dreamed of giving offence, nor, so much as he occupied by his own cares, would he have become aware of having done so at all, had not she at last made it known to him.

"I niver could hae thought, Maister Law," she said, "that ye would hae used us sae ill! I canna bide sic wark, Maister! na' I will n't!"

"My good Alice!" remonstrated Andrew, in astonishment.

"Yes, Maister," she continued, "one might think we care as little for ye as ye care for us!"

"How have I offended?" inquired Andrew, in so mild a voice that Alice felt reproved by it.

"Why a! now," said she, "I'd like to help ye wi' th' bairn; its nae a man's work, Maister Law, to be always dandling a babby!"

"Alice!" said he, laying his hand on her arm, and with an expression of countenance that touched her to the heart, "the child's mother is dead!"

"O Maister!" was Alice's reply.

"And I am," continued he, "in the place of father and mother too. I am not skilled in husbandry, like good Christie and Matthey o' Rivelin; and, as to the school—alas!" sighed he, "when I lost *her*, I found that I had too much to learn, to be able to teach. What, then, can I do, better than devote myself to the child?"

"O Maister!" exclaimed Alice, with tears in her eyes, "ye maun think nought at it. I'se wae I said ought. I sal niver forgive mysel!"

"You have meant kindly," replied he, combating his own emotion, "but let it not displease you that I continue to care for the child myself. Heaven grant that I may never want your better experience. You have known affliction, Alice," continued he, "and we have wept together under this very

roof; let us not, then, judge hardly of one another!"

Poor Alice was more angry with herself than she had ever been before; but this little misunderstanding and explanation made them better friends than ever. That very evening Andrew came out of his own parlour, and volunteered to read the paper to the good man and his wife; and Alice, touched by this concession on his part, tapped her little keg of elder wine, and, late as it was for such an operation, made half a dozen kettle cakes, with currants in them, to signalize the evening.

Andrew himself felt happier that night, than he had done since his wife's death. He had made others happy, and he was astonished to find, when he went to bed, that he had sat up an hour later than common. From that night he often sat with the family: "it was a saving o' candle-light to him," suggested the good housewife, willing to make it appear that he was not without an advantage in his condescension; and thenceforward he always read the newspaper aloud. From its being a favour now and then for him to sit by their fireside, it at length became a habit; and with him his books also were

transferred: and here was the greatest blessing of all; for, to their inexperienced minds, every book was full of delightful novelties. Mrs. Swithenbank declared so much knitting had never been done of a night before. So said every neighbour that came in; and it was not long before Christie o' Gibb's Ha's fireside became the most popular one in the dale; for all discovered that "the Maister's books were worth a' th' knitting sangs as iver were made."

---

## CHAPTER VII.

### FELIX LAW.

Thus things went on very amicably for five years, and little Felix Law, the happiest boy in Dent-dale, was a prodigy in the eyes of all. He knew as much as an old man, said they; and he was so docile and affectionate besides, and had such "pretty ways of his ain, that nane o' th' seven dales could find his fellow." "Bless his bonny face!" said one good wife. "He minds me o' him that's gane, o' my Richard that died o' th' chin-cough," said another; and, "he's the bravest bairn that sets fute in shoe-leather,"



said a third. Even old Dannel o' Foxcroft, the surliest man, and the miser of the dale, expanded his crumpled-up face whenever he saw him, and, on one particular May morning, when he was gathering cowslips in Dannel's own croft, had made him a present;—true it was only of a puppy, but then Dannel had never before, in the whole course of his life, been known to give away even a dog. But Felix found favour in all eyes, and many of his little acts and deeds circulated up and down the dale, and even into Dent-town itself.

Among other things, it was told that, as Christie and Alice sat by the fireside weeping, with their untasted supper of oatmeal porridge standing between them, because Christie's old mother, to whom he was much attached, was dead, Felix had gone, without saying a word to any one, and, standing on his little chair, had reached down the New Testament, and had read to them the 14th Chapter of St. John; then closed the book and replaced it on the shelf. "The parson could ha' done nae mair," said Alice, as she related the circumstance, "nor could the Maister himsel; and as soon as our Christie heard it, he wiped his eyes and took comfort, and eat a varra good supper;—as

for me," said she, "I'se sure it only made me greet the mair: it was sae strange to see a bairn hae sae much consideration!"

Nothing could be happier than the early life of Felix Law. His father was his daily companion, and the affection between the two was extreme. Andrew Law, though living upon only forty pounds a year, the rent of his little patrimony, yet, having no daily labour to perform, was looked upon as a sort of independent gentleman; and, in his rambles over the hills, and into the neighbouring dales, he and the child were welcomed at every fireside. Andrew botanized, and studied several branches of natural history; and Felix, like little Johnny, learned a deal only from being his daily companion: but then he had an advantage which Johnny had not—the whole business of Andrew's life was to instruct him.

No wonder was it, therefore, that he became such a paragon of learning. He could run over a list of hard Latin and Greek names, and know what all meant, as readily as he could count twenty, while Tommy and Ralph, the two elder boys at Gibb's Ha', could not master even the first syllables, much more remember them.

"Ah!" their mother would say, "if poor

like Johnny had but leaved, he would hae matched him, any how;—but the Maister has lost the knack o' teaching, poor man, since his wife died." Old Peggy Hibbledon, Alice's great-aunt, who lived at Garstthrop (in a neighbouring dale,) and with whom the boys often were, used to say, however, that "nae good would come of it," and "that, for her part, she thought much better o' th' man who, out of doors, would drive th' cart, and tae the pricks (knot) within, than of him who pulled up roots and weeds, like th' Maister, and gave them queer names, and sat by th' fireside *sweeling* (wasting) th' candle wi' wafting the leaves o' a big book!"

This was Peggy Hibbledon's philosophy; and, as she had a little farm, and some money beside, which she could leave to whomsoever she liked, good Mrs. Swithenbank was contented that Tommy should remain a dunce, and that Ralph should take his own time about his learning, seeing that "the Maister had turned gentleman, and the new school-maister was no great hand at teaching!"

But now I grieve at heart,  
That I have pain and sorrow to impart.

But truth must be told. Perhaps, like

good Mrs. Swithenbank herself, our readers have never guessed, that while Andrew Law was teaching his child, "death was o'er him stealing." But so it was; and the good wife was only made fully aware of the fact, by questioning Felix why his father went once a-week to Sedburgh. From him she learned that his father went to the doctor; and that, the last time he had been there, the doctor had felt his pulse, and shook his head, and looked very solemn; that his father was often very grave and sorrowful, when they were together alone, and often kissed him without speaking; that he did believe his father was ill, for that he never went now into Swaledale, nor Gars-dale, nor even into Barbindale, where it was so wild and beautiful, and where they saw the wild ponies and foxes; and that he stopped many times, if he only took a short walk; and his cough was very bad at night. Mrs. Swithenbank knew that; but as Andrew had never complained, she had thought no more of it. But now that her attention was called to him particularly, she remarked that he really looked ill, and she wondered at herself for never noticing how little he ate now-a-days. "But to be sure," said she, in self-excuse, "I'se sae many things to look after, and the Maister niver

takes it weel that anybody mel's wi' his concerns; so nae wonder I didn't see it: but if he really is ill," continued she, "we must see to it, for it would be nae joke having th' bairn left on our hands."

"As to that," replied her husband, who kept a sharp look after the main chance, "Linn's Gill would make it worth anybody's while to keep th' lad. But still, ye must look after th' Maister; I would na hae it said he was ill done by under my roof."

Accordingly, that same evening, when Andrew took his seat on the settle, with the Pilgrim's Progress in his hand, which he was then reading, both the dalesman and his wife were struck with his apparent feebleness; and Alice began to apologize and explain, for she really felt as if she had neglected her duty towards him.

"Make yourself easy, my good Alice," replied he, "I blame you not; but since you have spoken, know, then, that my disease is one which medicine cannot cure."

"O, Maister Law," said she, "ye must na be cast down. Please the Lord, ye'll mend as summer comes on."

"Ye'd better hae th' doctor," said Christie; "I'll fetch him mysel, Maister, with all th' pleasure in life! Or you'd mappen (may

happen) take Peggy Hibbledon's advice; she's a rare knowledge o' physic and salves; and that would be much cheaper, Maister Law."

"Thank you, my friend," returned Andrew, scarcely concealing a smile, "but Peggy Hibbledon would be of little use, and the doctor, I have consulted."

"Weel, weel," replied Christie; "but one's natterally frightened—there's th' lad, ye know."

Andrew did not need reminding of that; and, after his countenance had undergone a momentary change, he said—

"Perhaps, Christie, no time might be better than the present, to say what must be said before long;" and, laying down the book, and going out of the room and into his chamber, he returned again in a few minutes, with a folded paper, tied round with red tape, in his hand. In the meantime Alice and her husband had resumed their knitting, which, for a short time, had been suspended, and Andrew took his seat as before.

"I have taught the boy," he began, "all one so young could learn, and, especially, have I taught him obedience. He will not be much trouble to you, Alice!"

"O dear, no!" said Alice, and laid down her knitting—"niver was such a bairn!"

"You will still let him live with you," continued Andrew—"you will be a mother to him!"

"Yes," said she, putting her apron to her eyes, "as to my own bairn!" and Christie's knitting went on faster than ever.

"I know you will," repeated Andrew; "you will accept him in the place of him who is gone!"

"Sure, sure!" replied she, sobbing, and giving her hand to him, in token of assurance.

"Ay!" said Christie, "a mouthful o' me-at or o' porridge he sal niver want!"

"It is enough," said Andrew, taking up the folded paper, which he had laid beside him, and which Christie knew to be a will that he had witnessed some months before. "The nature of this you know," said Andrew. "The rent of Linn's Gill will be yours, in compensation for the needful costs of the child, till he shall be of age sufficient to manage his own affairs. But remember this, Christie—So long as Mikky Hawes will give as much rent for Linn's Gill as another man, he shall not be disturbed. He was my father's friend, and Dorothea liked him. I

know he is no favourite of yours, Christie; but let that pass; Mikky Hawes shall hold Linn's Gill!"

Christie Swithenbank did not look pleased; he said nothing, but he broke his yarn, and dropped a dozen stitches at once, and Andrew Law continued. "Out of the rent of Linn's Gill, I will that schooling be provided for Felix, for five years at least; and, after that time, Christie, he shall help you in your husbandry, and be taught worthily to fill his grandfather's place. You knew the old man, Christie; he was a good farmer, and there were no fields, in his time, like those at Linn's Gill; it lies warm, Christie—oh, it is a bonny place! and I thought to have died there; but the Lord's will be done! And now, my friends," added he, after a moment's pause, "may God bless you and yours, as you are faithful to this charge!"

Spite of Christie Swithenbank's love for Felix, and reverence for his father, this remark fell somewhat unpleasantly on his spirits—as if he had insinuated, that they could be other than faithful. "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing!" was the secret feeling of his bosom, and his reply in part expressed his dissatisfaction.



"You'd may-be better put another neame i' th' will, Maister Law; sure I've nae objection in life, seeing as how I'd wish to do right by th' lad."

"I will tell you," returned Andrew, "exactly the case. I know no man whose name I would put with yours, Christie; and I believe there need none. Had Joshua Gilsland been living, I should have left the boy under his care."

These words again wounded Christie's self-love, and troubled Alice a little also; but they said nothing, and Andrew went on.

"Joshua Gilsland's nephew, and the cousin of my late beloved wife, might have some claim upon the child; but I know nothing of the man. He lives in London; and report has said, although good Joshua Gilsland brought him up, that he is a free liver, and has a fine lady for his wife. I would not willingly venture the boy in their hands. I saw him at his uncle's funeral. But, my friends, my wish is, that you do not communicate with him, either respecting my death or the child, unless"—and here Andrew paused, as if unwilling to speak what he had to say—"unless you become weary of the charge of the child," said he, half hesitating still.

"Maister Law!" exclaimed Alice, "how could ye think sae?"

"I only speak of a *possibility*," replied Andrew: "no man can say positively what he shall, or shall not do, in a few years. But my dying request will be, that the boy remain with you, and that he be taught to revere the good stock from which he has sprung." Here he covered his face with his hands, and breathed an earnest but a silent prayer, that the Great Father would help it so to be!

"Theodore Le Smith," said Andrew, after a silence of many minutes, "is the name of the man in London."

"A mortal queer neame," returned Christie, after making an unsuccessful attempt to speak it.

"The name and the address is here," returned Andrew, taking a small slip of paper from under the red tape that tied up the will; "but to him you shall only consign the boy, in case of absolute necessity: any such absolute case I cannot, however, foresee. But in your hands I leave him; and no greater proof of my regard for you could I give, had I half England to bequeathe! Heaven abundantly bless and prosper you, and make the child an example to your children, and a blessing to your old age!"

With these words Andrew Law went to lie down beside his sleeping child, leaving the Swithenbanks to talk over this communication together; in which, as we have seen, were several things that were somewhat unpleasant. They did not like the preference given to Joshua Gilsland, nor the implied possibility of their failing in their duty; but above all was it displeasing to Christie, that Mikky Hawes should be bequeathed as the tenant of Linn's Gill. Mikky and he had never been friends; and, besides, he had instantly decided in his own mind to fix his brother Richard, who had long been an ill-doing farmer in Garsdale, upon Linn's Gill, and thus enable him to repay certain monies which Christie had lent him. Nevertheless, it is only justice to say, that, spite of these things, the dalesman and his wife loved Felix too well, and were too much touched by the prospect of the father's death, thus opened upon them, not conscientiously to determine on righteously fulfilling their duty to them both; and they sat devising many a kind-hearted little scheme, to an hour in which it was very unusual for dalesfolk to be out of their beds.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE NEW INMATE.

FELIX LAW was seven years old when his father died; and, as he was thus thrown entirely upon the good offices and affection of the Swithenbank family, it behoves us now to speak of the children of the household. These were five in number. Tommy, the eldest, the favourite and supposed heir of Peggy Hibbledon, of Garstthrop—a boy quite after her own heart, dull of intellect, but of an iron constitution, and “a prime knitter;” Ralph, a boy of lighter make and quicker intellect, and Felix’s school-companion, whenever he could devise no plea upon which to beg a holiday from father or mother; for they, having gradually outgrown the effect of Andrew Law’s scholarship, began soon to hold book-learning in less estimation. Besides these, were three younger children, one only of which we shall particularize, and that the only girl, “lile (little) Katie,” as she was called, the pet and pride of the family. Dear as she was to all the family, none loved her better than Felix; and to his care was she constantly confided, in preference to her own brothers, because the mother soon discovered

that, in spite of his being the inheritor of his father's love of books, and of his mother's delicate frame, he was far more trust-worthy than either of her elder sons.

After the death of his father, as may well be supposed, Felix gave less attention to books. It could not be otherwise; for, though he went to the free school in Dent-town, he found Latin and Greek very dull studies, after his father had ceased to be his teacher. But Felix had other occupations, well suited to his years, in which he found great pleasure; and Ralph Swithenbank, though he loved neither books nor work, was yet a good playfellow; and his invitation of "Come and lake," or play, was never refused. He was always ready to go with him to the beck, to tickle and catch trout, in doing which they were wonderfully successful; and though poor Alice, ever since the misfortune that happened to Johnny, had great terror of their playing near the water, yet she always welcomed them and their trout, with good will, and was ready to fry it with slices of ham—a favourite dale dish, and not a despicable one either.

"The willing back bears the burden," says the proverb; and therefore Felix had plenty of work to do, as well as play: but what was

work such as his, out in the open air, and in the pleasant fells? It was as good as play. He helped to fodder the cattle; he counted the sheep, and would go for miles over the hills, and into the distant dales, after the stray ponies. Whenever Christie went to the peat-pot, that is, to the portion of the peat-fell which belonged of right to him, and where he went, once a year, to cut peat-turfs, and set them up to dry, before they were fetched home and stacked for fuel, Felix was always his chosen companion. "Ye must go with me to th' peat-pot, to morn," he would say, "for I canna do wi' th' other lads; they're a' for laking and mischief! Sæ ye'll be ready as soon's its leight."

It was rather dull work, to be sure, up on the solitary fell-side, to be following Christie's spade all the day, and rearing up the black turfs one against the other, so that the wind might blow through them; still Felix never refused to go; for, in the midst of his work, he saw many things that filled him with delight, and, not least, the dancing, dazzling vapour, which the heat of the ascending sun drew upward from the spongy and moist ground. Then, besides this, and the bringing home the peats from the fell, after they were dry, and stacking them up behind the

house, there was the looking after the geese in spring. Felix never failed, before he went to school, to run down to what was called "the goose-hull," a kind of little hut, about four feet square, formed and roofed with coarse peat sods, built on the bank of the beck (or river,) and opening on to it; here the geese had nests, and here they hatched their eggs. To them Felix, every morning, carried food, and faithfully reported of their condition. Besides these, which were the property of the family, he had his own particular goose, called "Peggy Punch," and whose nest he made in the cart-hovel. Most punctually did he carry her food and water, bathing her breast when he fancied she was suffering from heat, and expending upon her both affection and unwearying care. In return, Peggy Punch was an excellent goose, always bringing finer, and even more numerous broods than any in the neighbourhood. Felix had his dog, too, the gift of Dannel o' Foxcroft, which had now grown into a fine sagacious creature, admirably skilful in fetching up sheep, and performing all those duties which the dogs of shepherds are remarkable for. His dog was called Tender, and was as well known, and as much admired, as Felix

Then he had Katie to love, and Ralph to play with; and, as the dale children would say, "Ralph Swithenbank was good to lake with, any how." Among their other pastimes Ralph and he set up little mills, at every fall of the gill; and at one particular time, when Christie had missed the boys for two whole days, excepting at meals, and went out to find them, tracing them by their voices up the gill to the very top of the fell, he counted no less than six-and-twenty of these merry little mill-wheels all turning at once. Felix's life, certainly, at this time, must have been a happy one, even though the memory of his father's loss often overclouded his spirits. But the buoyant heart of a child cannot be always grieving; and, with the increase of health, which this more active, out-of-doors life occasioned, came a yet freer and more joyous flow of spirits. Poor Felix! he would certainly have been perfectly happy but for two causes, which we will now relate.

When good Andrew Law made his will, he thought he was leaving things in the best possible way. He thought he had secured fast friends and a good home for his boy, and a careful managing tenant for Linn's Gill. Poor man! he little knew that he had



left an apple of discord among his friends. Mikky Hawes, the merriest old man in all Dent-dale, was, from some cause or other, greatly disliked by all the Swithenbank family, whether in Dent-dale or Gars-dale; and Christie o' Gibb's Ha,' as we have already said, greatly disappointed that he could not place his own brother at Linn's Gill, without violating the will of Andrew Law, revived every old animosity, and kept his mind in a perpetual state of excitement and ill-will; and, spite of Felix being perfectly guiltless of his father's arrangement, Christie, in his angry moods, never failed to vent a deal of his ill humours upon him.

But the well-head of all Felix's discomfort arose from a new inmate in the family. This was Alice's great aunt, Peggy Hibbledon, of whom we have before made mention. Peggy, who, after one or two unfavourable seasons, had found her purse very little heavier for farming; and her rheumatism a great deal worse, from the broken roof, which she would not have repaired, because it would cost money, made a sale of all her household gear and farming stock, and "took the house-end at Gibb's Ha,'" as good Andrew Law had done before her. Nether Christie nor Alice

at all opposed this arrangement, because they thus hoped to make more sure of her farm and her money.

Peggy Hibbledon, or "Naunty," as she was called by the Swithenbanks, was upwards of eighty years of age, yet hale and active, and, to all appearance, likely enough to live out her century. She was a tall but remarkably thin and bony woman, with a hard masculine voice, and spoke the broadest dale dialect. In spirit she was a miser, and had, it was said, almost famished herself to add to her hoards. Her appearance was very uncouth and strange, being dressed at the least possible expense, and in garments of the coarsest texture, and with the smallest consumption of material. When she went out, she invariably, winter and summer, wore a man's old great coat, which, some forty years ago, had belonged to her brother; and having, it may be presumed, worn out such hats as he left, she now wore a small bonnet of some very cheap material, most frequently of cotton. Yet was Peggy Hibbledon scrupulously clean in her person; and a narrow edging of real lace, to the close-fitting linen border of her cap, was the only luxury in which she indulged. It was well there was one redeeming quality about her; for, in par-

simony and ill-humour, the whole seven dales could not match her.

Such was the person who, within twelve months after good Andrew Law's death, came to occupy his place in the chimney-nook, and to sleep in the very chamber which Felix and his father had called their own, and where, even yet, hung the portraits of Dorothea's parents, and where the chests containing her own and her husband's personal property yet stood, and where, according to Andrew Law's last request, they were to remain till Felix was of an age to remove them back to Linn's Gill. Felix helped Mrs. Swithenbank to empty and refill the bed with the feathers she had taken out to dress; he beat the little bit of bed-side carpet, and carefully brushed the old moreen bed-hangings, and was the most useful creature in the world to the good wife, all the day she was whitewashing the walls and ceiling of the chamber. One might have thought that he had the greatest possible interest in making the new inmate comfortable;—but it was not exactly so; for, all the time, he was thinking that Naunty was very cross and disagreeable, and he wished she were not coming; but Mrs. Swithenbank was busy, and therefore he helped her. She, however, as if to give Felix a foretaste of

what he might expect, was herself very cross, and hard to please, all that day. The truth was, that, in the bottom of her heart, she wished that Naunty had been content to "bide i' Garstel!"

"Ay, bairn!" said Gideon, in his weak querulous voice, that same evening to Felix, who found him just ready to cry, and sitting among the fodder in the cow-shed.

"What ails ye?" asked Felix, sitting down beside him.

"Naunty's coming!" replied Gideon, now fairly crying.

"She won't hurt ye, Gideon!" said the boy, kindly. Gideon moved his head slowly, from side to side, and looked the picture of despair.

"I say," continued Felix, "she won't hurt ye!"

"I's poor Gideon!" was the innocent creature's reply.

"Weel, but everybody's kind to ye," replied Felix. Gideon looked in his face with an expression that almost startled him, and said, "A gert while since, afore the Maister was here, afore Johnny, poor bairn! was drowned, I leeved i' Garstthrop."

"Did ye leeve wi' Naunty?" asked Felix; for of that he never had heard.

"I's poor Gideon!" he replied. "Naunty has a heavy hand;" and he begun to rub his head and shoulder, as if the pain of the blows had returned.

"Did she thresh ye?" asked Felix, indignantly.

"I's poor Gideon!" was the half-witted creature's reply, "and I canna tae the pricks!" (cannot knit.)

"No," said Felix, who was quite aware of this unfortunate inability, "but I'll learn ye!"

"Ay, ay!" chuckled poor Gideon, forgetting at once his trouble, in the prospect of learning to knit. Felix was true to his promise, as far as the attempt went; but he soon made the melancholy discovery, that to "tae the pricks" was too intricate a business for poor Gideon.

The day at length came on which Naunty was to be fetched; and Christie, intending to do honour to his relative, bespoke the loan of Matthey o' Rivelin's new tax-cart, or shandry, the only one in the dale, for the purpose. The family were all up before day-break, and Tommy, who was Naunty's favourite, was to accompany his father. As soon as breakfast was over, Tommy was despatched with the horse, and Christie, booted and

great-coated, was to set off by the short foot-way, soon after, and so meet him at the Rivelin; whence they were to set forth in grand style. Scarcely, however, seemed Tommy to have gone, when he returned, at full gallop, and out of breath, bearing the disastrous tidings that Matthey's shandry lay in a ditch by the bridge, with the shafts broken off, and otherwise disabled. Scarcely had Tommy assured the astonished household that it could be no other than Matthey's, seeing he had spelled the name at the back, when the good-man of Rivelin made his appearance. There could be no longer any doubt, for he came full of wrath against all borrowers and lenders of shandries, his having been lent the day before, to take Adam o' Baxensyke to Sedbur' Fair, and thus demolished on its return.

"I neither tae it neeghbourly nor civil o' ye," said Alice Swithenbank, applying every word of Matthew's tirade to themselves, "and I wish we'd niver asked ye to lend it us!"

"Why a! why a!" remonstrated Matthew; but Alice interrupted him. "Ye needna 'Why a!'" said she, "I kna' na why we need borrow o' any man—we've a good cart of our ain; and Naunty had as lief ride in it as in

yer fine, new-fangled whirl-a-gig; and I'm glad nane o' us set fute in it."

Matthew tried to mollify matters, but she replied by addressing her husband. "Now, pray ye be brisk, Christie, and get th' cart cleaned out, and put th' elbow-chair in it, and lay a lile feather bed i' th' bottom, and I'll be boun' th' ould body 'll ride cannily enough!"

Christie Swithenbank, although he was a middle-aged man, had yet thought, with considerable pleasure, of driving a smart new shandry into Garsdale; and it was with the humiliating sense that he did not cut as good a figure as he meant to do, that he passed his neighbour on the high-road. Matthey had walked away from Gibb's Ha' affronted, and Christie had taken his wife's view of the affair; therefore, for the first time in their lives, the two dalesmen passed with a very cool nod of recognition.

Although Peggy Hibbledon's sale had taken place two or three days before, and almost every moveable had been taken out of the house, still she remained its tenant; and that morning had prepared, upon her cold and comfortless hearth, her breakfast of porridge, in a pipkin without a handle, which no one had thought worth buying. As Christie had promised to be with her by ten o'clock, no

sooner was her breakfast over, than she carried forth her portable luggage—sundry baskets, and innumerable bundles, leaving two oaken chests to be removed by the stouter arm of her kinsman; and, being ready apparelled in her travelling gear, with a pink and white gingham handkerchief tied over her cotton bonnet, she took her seat on the horse-block, whence she got a sight of the road, and should thus have the first view of his approach.

Peggy's great silver watch, round and bulky as a moderate-sized turnip, told the hours ten, eleven, and twelve, and yet Christie had not made his appearance; and, as the time wore longer, her temper grew shorter, till at length she came to the determination, that now, come when he would, she would not go that day.

"That's tou at last!" exclaimed Peggy, as at length the cart halted at her door.

"Ay sure," returned Christie, "and I hope ye're ready!" It was the most unlucky expression Christie could have used.

"Ready!" she retorted; "that's your word, is it? Why, I've been sitting three long hours upo' th' horse-block! Ready, indeed! It's nae me as will wait next time!" And, saying that, she deliberately began to take off her travelling habiliments.



"Now, what are ye after, Naunty?" said Christie, soothingly; "I'se nae to blame—Matthey's shandry's brokken, and I was fain to come i' th' cart."

"Tell na me that th' shandry's brokken," returned Peggy; "am na I eighty-three, and niver set fute i' a shandry i' my life? and 'tis na likely it ud get brokken th' varra day I wanted it! Na, na; tou may go back as tou came!"

"Alice has sent ye th' big chair, and a feather bed," remonstrated Christie; "ye'll go cannily, ony how, i' th' cart!"

"Thinks she I'm leame, or hae got a brokken back, that she mun send feather beds for ma? I tell tha I winna gae!" And, with these words, she raked up the peats on the hearth, and woke up the slumbering fire, while Christie, sorely vexed, yet not venturing to utter a word, stood in the door-way striking his boots with his whip.

Peggy, however, had no intention of foregoing her comfortable residence at Gibb's Ha'; she was only determined to give as much trouble as she could: therefore, after what she thought a needful show of resistance, she allowed her personal property to be put into the cart, and herself to be seated "i' th' big chair, upo' th' feather bed."

A rainy afternoon's drive in a cart, twelve

miles, from Garstthrop to Gibb's Ha', in Dentdale, with the wind driving right into her face, did not, of course, sweeten poor Peggy's temper; nor did the sight of the warm cozy fireside, and Alice smiling in her best, nor the merry shouts of the children, who, like all country children, thought that a guest coming, especially when "suet cakes, wi' currants in," were made, was a very pleasant event, mollify her; and her first salutation was about the offending feather bed.

"Ay, tae it oot, pr'ythee, for th' watter's bin sopping aboot ma feet like pools i' a peat-pot!" And, stalking into the house, she did not deign even to notice Tommy, who, after he could not ride in the tax-cart, had declined to accompany his father, but now met her at the door.

A night's rest often has a wonderfully soothing effect, even upon a rough temper; but Peggy's first words announced that she had again found a cause of displeasure.

"I sall na hae those gert ill-favort picturs i' ma chamer," said she, on first meeting with Alice, "and I hae turned 'em oot upo' th' stair-head!"

"They were the Maister's," returned Alice, "and I gave him my word they sud hing there till th' bairn went to his ain hame!"

"I care na what ta promised," replied

Peggy; "but i' my chamer they sall na be! An' pry'thee, where's th' sampleth, framed and glazed, at I gie thee when ta wert wed? Mappen (may happen) it warn't good enough to hing up!"

"Why, a! now," returned Alice, "it hings a back o' th' door!"

"And a' thae kists i' th' chamer," continued the old body, without noticing Alice's explanation respecting the sampler, "I reckon they war th' Maister's too."

"Ay sure," replied Alice, "and ye must na shift 'em. I put 'em all oot o' th' way, ane o' top o' th' other; they hold his mother's things, poor bairn!"

"I sall nae hae em i' my chamer," was her reply; "and sae noo tou knaws."

Felix's property was accordingly removed out of the chamber in which his father had died, and all was stowed away, some here and some there, as Alice could best find room; and the two portraits, turned face to face, were laid upon the wooden head of poor Gideon's bed, up in the loft.

## CHAPTER IX.

## MIKKY HAWES'S SHEEP-WASHING.

THE influence of Peggy's unhappy temper was felt by all; but Felix and Gideon were especially the objects of it. There is, unfortunately, no disease more infectious than bad temper; and, by degrees, every member of the family, more or less, became soured by it. It would have been impossible to recognise the fireside as that at which Andrew Law, scarcely three years before, had sat, with the children gathered about his knees, and kindly neighbours sitting around, "wi' the pricks i' their hands," listening to the book he was reading, or merrily talking, as good neighbours wont, and parting, towards midnight, with friendly "fare-ye-weels," and "we's reeght glad to see ye!"

Poor Peggy Hibbledon! she was a most unhappy being, as the unamiable always are; but, what was most to be lamented was, the influence she gained over the mind of Christie Swithenbank himself. His very countenance had become changed; it had acquired a hard, suspicious expression, while his temper was irritable and severe. Peggy, to whom money was an idol, spared not to speak of Christie's

losses by his brother, and of the wrong "the Maister" had done him, by not leaving Linn's Gill in his own hands, to tenant as he pleased. Linn's Gill was a sort of Eden in Dent-dale, and the very sight of its green "pasture heads," and the abundant flocks on its fell-side, all lying, as they did, within sight of the windows of Gibb's Ha', was a never-ending source of chagrin. Peggy, poor woman, had it always on her tongue; at one time reproaching Christie with not getting violent possession, and at another, abusing the memory of "the Maister," as having ill-used his "oud friend, for the sake o' a cretur like Mikky Hawes, who was a'ways up to some nonsense or other, just like a gert bairn!"

It was sorely against the kind heart of Alice, that all this unhappiness existed; but the current of parsimony and crabbedness had set in too strong, for her to resist. It was only by stealth, now, that she could slip into Felix's hand the hot suet-cake which she had privately baked for him, when he had been with his dog, to some solitary barn of "the intake," or farthest *enclosed* pasture on the fells, to fodder the young cattle on a cold winter's afternoon. It was only by stealth that any little indulgence was afforded; for she yielded, good woman as she was, to the

stronger powers, not because she liked their ways, but for peace sake! Gibb's Ha' was, indeed, a changed and a melancholy place!

Felix could not help disliking Peggy Hibbledon, and all the more because she neither spared his father's memory, nor his living friend, Mikky Hawes; and he often stole to bed, without his supper, that he might get out of her way.

In the third summer after his father's death, and during the midsummer holidays, he ran down, as did many a dales-boy beside, to see the sheep-washings in the "dubs," or deep rocky basins of the beck, or river, where this operation was performed. Mikky Hawes had assembled his neighbours to assist at his sheep-washing, which was to take place on that particular day, in the great dub at Scale-gill-foot; that is, where Scale-gill discharges itself into the beck. There was Matthey o' Rivelin, and his man; there were the three stout brothers, the Hodgsons of Lilly-garth, and Adam Hibblethwaite of Studley-syke. The three Hodgsons and Mikky were all busied in the dub, washing the sheep and wringing out their fleeces, while the others caught and dragged forward the bleating creatures, which were penned in folds just by, for the operation.

There also were three or four merry young girls, all "dale lasses," handing out rum and milk, every now and then, and ready, the whole time, to laugh and joke with anybody.

It was a very attractive scene to Felix, especially as he had heard Peggy Hibbledon say, the night before, that "it was a' extravagance—sae much eating and drinking, and such a rabble o' folk, either at a washing or a shearing; and, sae lang as she leaved at Gibb's Ha,' she'd order things in anither fashion." From this, Felix understood that there would be no merry-making for them this year; and, on that very account, he was the more disposed to enjoy a merry-making elsewhere. He was warmly welcomed by Mikky, with whom he was a great favourite, and who had a perverse pleasure in entertaining him, and even decoying him to his house, because he knew it vexed Christie, and "th' oud woman," as he called Peggy.

Mikky was merrier than common that day, because he had worked hard and drank freely of the rum and milk. "He does na get fat wi' laughing, up yonder, poor bairn," said he, taking Felix by the arm, and talking the while to Matthey o' Rivelin.

"Th' oud lady's as sour as th' north side o' a crab-tree," returned Matthey.

"I's warrant, now, he knaws na the taste o' a berry (gooseberry) pasty," said Mikky Hawes.

Felix said they had had none this year, "because there was a blight upo' th' berry-bushes." He might have said something very witty, indeed, for they all laughed, and said they believed there was; and then, one of the Hodgsons o' Lilly-garth, told how Tommy Hibbledon, Peggy's brother, who was living some forty years ago, had, once upon a time, when he had got a drop too much at Sedbur' Fair, done so rash and unheard of a thing as to invite his father and two or three more to dinner. All were amazed at his venturing so far, for they all knew that Peggy was "maister at hame," and hardly allowed the poor body victuals to eat: and so, for curiosity, they all promised to go; agreeing, however, among themselves, to take their dinner with them. When the day came, they took a roast leg of mutton, a cold goose, and a big berry pasty, with a keg of strong drink; all which they hid behind the peat-stack, and then presented themselves as expected guests. Sure enough there was the table spread, and there was Tommy, but looking, for all the world, as if his head was off; and Peggy stood in the



chimney nook, over a fire about as big as a hat, frying a handful of something in the pan, and looking as black as a thunder cloud. "Weel," said he, "when they saw what a dish o' cat's tongues\* there was going to be for dinner, one o' the party slipped out, and, as the table stood at the back o' th' screen, he put the things on as cannily as could be—roast mutton at top, cold goose at bottom, and herry pasty i' th' middle, and th' keg o' strang drink upo' th' table as stood by. When all this was done he made as if he was just come in, and 'Aweel, Peggy,' says he, 'I's sure we's obleeged to ye!' 'Nane o' our wives could a gotten a better dinner!' says another; and, 'Is this a goose o' ye're ain fattin',' says a third,' a' gathering about the table, while Tommy, poor body, looked just ready to drop. 'Dinna fash ye're sel to fry the cat's tongues,' says one of them; 'here's mair than we sall eat, upo' th' table;' and they gave Tommy a wink, and so sat down, and a rare merry night they had of it, for Peggy was sae vexed, she taed up her pricks and went out; and so they had it a' to themselves; and, sure, what a dinner did poor Tommy eat! for he was half famished. How

\* A dale-phrase for a meagre dish.

they settled it afterwards, atween 'em I know not, but father used to laugh till tears run down his face, whenever he told it."

With this merry story, the sheep-washing being ended, and the flocks again turned abroad, they went up Linn's Gill to supper; Mikky keeping fast hold of Felix, and declaring that he should have berry-pie and cheesecake for his supper, unless he liked better "to hae a drap o' tea wi' th' women-folk; for his oud woman," he said, "made rare tea; it was as strang as dragon's blood, as sweet as ony syrup, wi' a citation o' cre-am in't!"

Amid all this good cheer Felix enjoyed himself amazingly; but he took care, as he well knew he must, to get back to Gibb's Ha' before dusk, that Christie and Peggy Hibbledon might not question of his absence. Poor fellow! he could not help wishing, as he lay in his bed, that he lived at Linn's Gill with old Mikky and his wife, rather than here, where everybody looked so dull, and where he never could go even into the chimney corner, without fearing to anger Peggy.

Felix knew that the sheep-shearing at Linn's Gill would be on the next Monday week; that the same party would be again assembled; that there would be a greater

supper still, and a fiddler and a dance beside; and he determined to be there. One difficulty, however, presented itself—the dance would not be over till past midnight; how, then, should he manage to remain out so long, or get back unquestioned? To gain Christie's permission to go was impossible; he never thought of that; but he did think of asking Alice's leave, for he knew that if he tried very hard, some time when they two were alone together, he could persuade her either to sit up for him, or to leave the door unbarred. He remembered her many little kindnesses—the triangles of buttered kettle-cake, slipped secretly into his hand when he went out, after some ebullition of Christie's temper. How his heart glowed towards her at this remembrance! And, in the strength of this remembrance, he spoke.

"Might I gae to the shearing at Linn's Gill?"

"Why a! now," said Alice, confounded at the question; "what's come to the bairn? Would ye hae Christie to fleesh ye, that ye talk o' Linn's Gill i' that fashion?"

Felix, however, was not to be silenced. "A weel, now," he replied, "is na Linn's Gill my ain, where a' my father-folk leaved afore me, and where I was born, and where

my mother died? Why may na I gae to the shearing?"

Alice looked sorry and puzzled, and Felix went on. "Let me gae, dear Alice! It's sae wae here! I's sure I niver hae a kind word fra Christie; and, if it was na for ye, my varra heart would break, many a time." And with those words, and the tears streaming down his cheeks, he took hold of her hand. "Just leave the door unmade, and I'll nae make a noise. Christie winna hear me, nor Naunty; and I'll bring lile Katie a cheese-cake and a bit o' berry-pie!"

Poor Alice could not resist. "Now, promise me," she said, "if Christie finds oot where ye've been, ye must na say as I helped ye!"

"Niver fear me!" said Felix, kissing her; "Christie may fleesh me to death afore I'll tell!"

## CHAPTER X.

### MIKKY HAWES'S FESTIVAL.

THE sheep-washing supper was nothing to the shearing supper. Mikky was in high spirits, for his sheep were the best on the fells, and all his neighbours protested that he had "the finest show o' woo' o' any yan

i' th' dale!" Like as in the days of the Hebrew Shepherd-kings, on one of their pastoral festivals, "who had gone to him then, had gone to him on a good day;" and he determined that nothing should be spared in the entertainment of the guests.

All who had been at the sheep-washing were at the shearing also, and many more beside; for every body liked Mikky, and his "oud woman," as he called her; and "Elsy o' Mikky's," as they called her, was reckoned a rare cook. There was Nelly o' Rivelin and her sister, a bonny lass, who bid fair to rival Nelly herself, out of Swale-dale; and the lasses that the three Hodgsons o' Lilly-garth were courting; and there were Adam and Isabel o' Studley-syke, and their five grown bairns; and all the Cudforths o' Dockin-syke; and half the dale beside;—such a shearing as had hardly ever been known before. Felix had his dinner at Gibb's Ha,' and then, slily touching Alice's arm, and exchanging with her a look of intelligence, and whispering, "I's nae forget lile Katie!" went out, and ran with good speed up to Linn's Gill, fearing greatly, all the way, although he had seen Christie set out to look after the sheep upon the fell, lest he should, unexpectedly, come upon him at every turn.

As soon as Felix reached the garden gate

at Linn's Gill; he heard the sound of a fiddle, and, the next moment, saw the old fiddler seated on a stone under the great pear-tree, on the sunny side of the house, tuning his instrument; while his daughter, a young girl of about eighteen—who, being an excellent dancer, accompanied him, not only to entertain the people with her *pas-seul*, but also to assist her father's music with her tambourine—sat on the ground beside him, fast asleep, with her head leaning upon a mossy bend in the tree trunk, which served her for a pillow. The girl was slight of form, and good looking, although sunburnt: she was dressed in a faded red silk petticoat, and a black bodice with loose white sleeves. She had wrapped her head in one corner of the large tartan shawl that enveloped her person, but which, falling open in her sleep, revealed her under habiliments. Felix knew this pair, for they frequented the dales in seasons of festivity, and were retained wherever extraordinary merriment was going forward.

"So there'll be a dance," said Felix, speaking low, that he might not disturb the girl. The old man looked up, and, still drawing the bow slowly across the strings, returned the salutation; "and a merry dance I's sure," continued Felix.

"I's bought a ha'poth o' rosin down i' Dent-town," said the old man, "for the missis niver fails either i' eating or drinking, and I'll keep their feet at it langer than the day lasts:" and, so saying, he bent down his ear to his fiddle, and, looking up archly out of the corners of his eyes, scraped away to his merriest measure, as a specimen of his skill. The accustomed sound wakened the girl; she rubbed her eyes, sat up, and looked ready for action; but, seeing that her father was performing to so small an audience, wrapped herself completely in her shawl, and, in two minutes, was again fast asleep. Felix very much approved of this sample of the night's entertainment; and, feeling as if the old man's merry strain had set the muscles of his feet in movement, or as if, like Mercury, living wings were growing from his heels, he ran into the house, to see how affairs were going on there.

The kitchen and the parlour were both full of guests; and merry women's faces were even seen looking through the chamber windows. How all the guests were to find seats below stairs, it was not easy to tell. Elsy had outdone herself in her cookery. There were four great pies, made of legs of mutton, cut small, and mixed with currants, raisins and candied peel—a favourite dish—

all swimming with rich syrup; there were rice puddings, with currants in; munificent dishes, smoking hot, of trout and slices of ham; berry (gooseberry) pasties and cheese-cakes, without number; and that needful accompaniment of a rustic feast, plenty "o' strang drink."

All pronounced the supper excellent, and all bore testimony to the truth of their words, by the quantity they ate; nor were the old fiddler and his daughter forgotten; for though they were set down to the little dresser in the back kitchen, they were most liberally supplied with all the good things of the table.

Felix was no little astonished to find, "after the rage of hunger was appeased," and all began talking, that their own fireside at Gibb's Ha,' and the altered housekeeping there, seemed to be the most fertile topic of conversation. Every one had his joke or his anecdote, and he himself was constantly appealed to for the truth of what they told.

"O! she's a rare ane, that Peggy o' yours!" said Adam Hibblethwaite; "I's welded her o'er and o'er, and I canna find a lock o' leggin in her; she's a' futing!"

To make this characteristic description intelligible we must be allowed to interrupt our narrative with a word or two. In these



dales, the farmers often employ themselves in the house, with sorting and carding wool for knitting at home: this they call *welding*; the fine locks of wool are thrown aside, for the better parts of the stocking, and are called *leggin*, while all the coarse goes by the name of *futing*, or footing. Hence, Adam Hibblethwaite's description was strikingly appropriate. Peggy was altogether composed of the roughest and coarsest material.

A loud laugh from all the company followed his words; and the young people rose up, impatient for dancing. The tables, the chairs, and the wooden screen, vanished as if by magic; the fiddler took his seat on a stool at one end, and the fiddler's daughter commenced the merriment with a *pas-seul* that won the applause of all the company. So much, indeed, was she applauded, and "sae bonny" was she, all agreed, that Laurie Hibblethwaite, much to his mother's chagrin, it must be confessed, asked her to be his partner; and, forthwith, two-and-twenty couple stood up for a country dance.

They kept it up till past midnight; and then Mikky Hawes declared that "it was na fit for a bairn to go by his sel; and that he should e'en stay, now he was there, and sleep i' th' varra chammer where he was born." Felix had no fear of robbers entering the

house at Gibb's Ha,' even though the door were left unbarred through the night; and, as he was tired and sleepy, and really was disinclined to turn out, late as it was, he allowed himself to be over-persuaded, only making Mikky promise to call him as soon as it was light, that he might get back before Christie was stirring.

Mikky was true to his promise, only in part. At half past three he went to the chamber in which Felix slept, with the intention of waking him, and returning him to Gibb's Ha,' with some remnants of the last night's feast for his breakfast. But Felix was so soundly asleep, that the old man returned to his bed, declaring he could not find in his heart to disturb the poor bairn.

It was past eight o'clock, and, bright and sunny as the morning was, looked even later, when Felix woke, really terrified and dismayed to find himself where he was, with the full force of Christie's vengeance before his eyes; while the sense that he had deceived his friend Alice, by staying out all night, lay yet heavier upon his heart. He did not forget to ask Elsy to give him a cheesecake and a bit of berry-pasty for lile Katie; which was given with such cordial good will, that he then preferred the same

request for poor Gideon; and, scarcely able to eat any breakfast himself, set forth for Gibb's Ha.' Christie was "away to Sedbur'" on some business, and Alice was about her own household work, at the back of the house, when Felix arrived; but her countenance showed too plainly that she was grievously displeased with him.

"A weel," she said, "ye've kept ye'r promise rarely! What think ye the good man threatened the morn, when he fand the door open, and ye nae at hame when he wanted ye?"

"I's sae wae!" returned Felix; "but it was sae late last neight and I o'erslept mysel the morn. I canna tell what Christie said, but I's sure he's fearful angry."

"Why, he said he'd fleesh ye within an inch o' your life! and ye deserve it!" said she, with a tone very unlike her own; "for I thought na ye would hae deceived me?" And Alice began to scour her brass pan with renewed energy. Poor Felix knew not what to say, nor how to make his peace. He thought, however, it was no time to produce his good things for lile Katie; so, stealing quietly into the pantry, he put them in a plate, and turned a little basin over them, intending to give them some time in the

day; and, in the meanwhile, he went up the gill, to try if he could not find some diversion in looking after his mills and mouse-traps. From Ralph, whom he met soon after, he learnt, to his infinite relief, that his absence was merely supposed to be of the morning, all believing him to have got up by day-break "to go a-laking," and that his father wanted him merely to look after "the Scotty kye"—young Scotch cattle, which he had lately bought—during his absence. A load was at once taken from Felix's mind, and, determining to do his full duty by "the Scotty kye," and everything else beside, he went on to the fells, and did a hard day's work before he returned home. In the afternoon he stole his treasure out of the pantry, and, taking lile Katie and Gideon into the cow-shed, divided it between them. A new difficulty then occurred—the ensuring their secrecy. He enjoined upon them, however, that they should not say a word about it; and he then carried Katie up the pasture, to drive the pleasant memory of the pasty out of her mind, by fresh objects.

Christie returned with a full knowledge of Felix's delinquency. He had fallen in, on his way homeward, with Adam Hibblethwaite, who, talking of the business of the season—sheep-shearing—mentioned Mikky o' Linn's

Gill's great supper, and of Felix, who was one of the company.

Poor fellow! he would not have stood reeling yarn before the door, as he did, had he known what was Christie's intentions towards him as he rode up to his gate. If he had, he would assuredly have been tempted to run off again to the home of his father-folk, before Christie could have reached Gibb's Ha,' by many miles. But as it was, he stood, though not without a sudden palpitation of heart, reeling away, as Christie dismounted, and, instead of taking his horse to the stable, as was his practice, left it, hot as it was, standing at the gate, and came round to the front of the house, cracking his long-lashed, heavy riding-whip.

The next moment he had seized Felix by the arm, throwing down, at the same time, the great wooden, three-legged reel, and began to beat him with all the force of his strong arm.

"Oh Christie, dinna fleesh me! I hae done naething sae varra wrang!" exclaimed he; but Christie was too angry to spare him, and laid on only the more, for his words; and the sounds of his heavy blows sounded through the house. Peggy Hibbledon looked through the window; Tommy and Ralph peeped round the corner of the house, feeling all in tremble; Gideon ran and hid himself, as

he always did when he was frightened, in the hay-loft, while "lile Katie" cried as if her father were beating her.

"For shame, Christie!" said Alice, seizing hold of his arm, "he's a fatherless and motherless bairn, and ye sall na fleesh him!"

"I'll hae my will o' him! I'll learn him to go to Mikky Hawes's, after we're a-bed!" exclaimed Christie, growing more angry at every word.

"He's a motherless bairn!" continued Alice, thrusting herself between them, "and he sall na be without a friend to tae his part! Get ye gane bairn!" said she, disengaging him from her husband's grasp. "And now, Christie," said she, addressing him, "gae and look after the mare; and then come and tae thy supper, and dinna mae a brute of thyself, i' this fashion!"

Sorely beaten as poor Felix was, the pain of his body was nothing to the anguish and agony of his mind. True, he knew, when he went to Linn's Gill, that he adventured the displeasure of Christie, but now that Christie's blows had fallen heavily upon him, he felt much less grief in having offended, than hatred against his chastiser. Did not his father and his mother, he reasoned, like

Mikky Hawes? and had he not often and often been to Linn's Gill with his father, and sate in the porch, hour after hour, listening to him and the old folks, telling of his grandfather and mother, and the time when he was a boy? How kind and comfortable it all seemed! and must he now be punished for visiting the friends of his dead parents! Poor fellow! he thought of "lile Johnny," drowned in the beck, and he almost thought he would go and drown himself. He was utterly miserable; he felt ashamed of seeing even the children of the house; and, hardly knowing where to go, he went to the pasture-head and looked across the valley. There, nearly opposite, lay Linn's Gill: how he wished he were there! and, in the bitterness of his heart, he felt that, to like Christie again, were almost impossible; even the intercession of Alice, at that moment, failed to soften him. At length he reached the solitary barn on the edge of the fell, and, there sitting down, he tried to compose his mind. How forlorn he felt himself to be! and with what yearning memory he recalled the love and tenderness of his father! With sentiments of affection came a softer state of feeling, and then tears, which streamed from his eyes as if his very heart would break.

Just then, a small warm hand, from behind, touched his cheek softly, and, looking round, half in terror, he saw little Katie, who had followed him up the fields to this lonely place. In a moment her arms were round his neck, and she was sobbing on his bosom.

How holy and healing are love and kindness! Not a word was spoken; but Felix felt that he was not quite alone in the world; and, falling on his knees, with his arm round the child, he poured out his soul to God, though he uttered no articulate sound. Then, stealing softly back to Gibb's Ha,' he kissed the child, and bade her go to her mother, but say not one word about him; and, without encountering any of the family, he then stole softly to his own little bed.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE DAY AFTER.

NOTHING could have been a more heinous offence, in the eyes of Christie Swithenbank, than that Felix should consort with Mikky Hawes; and the offence was still more aggravated by Mikky himself, as we shall show. Ill news, it is proverbially said, flies on eagles' wings: it was not very long, therefore,



before it was conveyed across the beck, and up to Linn's Gill, that Christie o' Gibb's Ha' had beaten Felix within an inch of his life, all because he had gone to the shearing supper at Linn's Gill. Mikky and his wife were as angry as two kind-hearted old folks, who dearly loved children, could well be, especially when they had been the means of bringing punishment on "the poor bairn" themselves.

"I've niver set fute i' Gibb's Ha' syne his father's death," said Mikky, "but I've half a mind to gae noo."

"Why a! pr'ythee, do!" replied Elsy, "and tae a' the blame o' thysel; for he'd a' gaed hame that neight an' thou'd a let him."

"The Maister sud na a left him i' Christie's hands," said Mikky, "for he's tired o' his bargain aready, if a's true as one hears. What think'st thou if I sud mae matters up wi' Christie, and get him to gie th' bairn up to us?"

"Linn's Gill's his ain natteral haeme," replied Elsy, delighted at the thought; "and tou could, mappen, do better for him than Christie; for I reckon th' forty pounds gaes into na pocket but Christie's;—and he could sleep upo' poor Richard's bed—capital feather bed that—sae he could!"

"I'll gae this varra day," said Mikky: "I'll

just wash mysel, and put on my better coat, and gae afore tea."

The fate of poor Felix was decided instantly, when Mikky, who was hardly asked to sit down, told his wishes to Christie Swithenbank. "I'll nae gie up th' bairn to ony body but yan. I hae his naeme and his address, i' Lunnon;—and to Lunnon he sall gae, for he's gettin above my hand, ony how!" Such was Christie's reply; and when Mikky urged the matter still, grown desperate by the other's doggedness, his only answer was, "I sall na say nae mair;—for my ain mind's made up, ony how!"

"Nay, for sure ye winna send the poor bairn away, for nae sae great fault either," said Alice, as Christie announced his intentions to her that same evening, which intentions were, of course, warmly seconded by Peggy Hibbledon. "For what sud he tae upo' his sel th' care o' other folk's bairns, pr'ythee?" said she; "nay, nay, send him to Lunnon, and he'll learn, I make nae doubt, to know his friends when he gets 'em!"

Mikky had certainly made matters worse, for he had decided Christie upon a step which before had only been in idea. It would vex Mikky Hawes, and that was a tempting reason; whilst he had the unanswerable plea, that in sending the boy to London he

was only fulfilling Andrew Law's wishes, when the time came that he desired to give up the charge. "I sall write to the man this varra neight," said he, "as sure as I leeve!" and accordingly, an hour afterwards, he was seated at his desk, inditing the following letter, which, however, was the labour of two or three nights before it was fairly completed, and then copied out to his satisfaction. Poor Felix had hitherto, on every difficult occasion, been his scribe, but it was not deemed desirable to employ him here, and the epistle ran thus:—

"Mr. THEODORE LE SMITH, Esq.

"Sir—I take the liberty of troubling you about a matter that concerns you and me, and which, when you are acquainted with, you will think it right you should know. About three years syne your respected relative by the wife's side, being the niece of sa respectable a gentleman as Mr. Joshua Gilsland, was removed by death, viz. Mr. Andrew Law, late teacher of the Free School, Dent-town. Being removed by death, after having leeved under my roof for seven years, to wit, since his respected wife's death, he left the care of his bairn, then just turned of seven, to my care, with forty pound' by th' year to be paid for mentenance

in edication, &c. If at any time I sud wish to place the bairn out o' my hands, it should be i' yours. Things hae sae turned out as makes me wish to turn o'er the care o' th' bairn to you. I sall be greatly obleeged if you will send me word by letter when the bairn sall come to you, as I reckon the stage wagon will be most suitable, being sae young, and without friends. You will be pleased to make proper assignments, and so forth. .

"So no more at this time from me, who am, sir, your obedient Servant,

"CHRISTIE SWITHENBANK."

"*Gibb's Ha', Dent-dale, Yorkshire.*

"N. B. The £40 goes with th' bairn, for mentinence, edication, ansetra.

"N. B. An answer will oblige."

When Felix first heard that he was going to London, an indescribable sensation passed over him; but whether it was amazement, or terror, or a half-satisfaction, would be difficult to say. Perhaps it was all combined. His situation at Gibb's Ha' had become one of constraint, for he never ceased to feel that neither Christie nor Peggy were his friends; and he, many a time, wished he were anywhere than there: but then, he had lived in Dent-dale all his life; he had been very

happy there; and, if Christie and Peggy would but let him, could be very happy there again. London was a vague idea—it was a long way off; he never had known any one who had been there, not even his father. Kendal he heard of frequently, and Lancaster and Manchester, where the butter-carts went weekly out of the dale with butter; but London!—he knew not exactly where it was, and he grew half alarmed when he thought of it; and more especially so, as Mikky and Elsy o' Linn's Gill, and the Rivelin-folk, all were loud and vehement against it, as a hard-hearted scheme. "Nae better," said they, "than transporting the poor bairn, who had neither father nor mother, beyond seas. Christie o' Gibb's Ha' might be ashamed o' himsel!" Thinking of it thus, Felix's heart often failed him; and then the kind face of Alice, and her many acts of kindness; and "lile Katie," so merry and so loving; and Ralph, that was such a good play-fellow—all became inexpressibly dear to him, and he began to dread the answer to Christie's letter, which, it was understood, was to fix the time for his departure.

Several weeks, however, went on, and no answer was received; and, in the meantime, an event occurred, which we must relate in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER XII.

## KATIE'S ADVENTURE.

"TH' red cow's badly; she winna eat, and she looks down i' th' eyes," said Christie, one morning, as he came in from milking.

"Poor cretur!" said Alice, "I'll mae her a warm mash o' meal: it'll, mappen, do her good."

The warm mash o' meal did her a little good at first, but she got worse and worse towards night; and the next morning Felix, who was ever the ready messenger, was sent off by Christie to Dent-town, to fetch the cow-leech; "and tell him to mae a' th' haste he can," said he, "for her's varra badly."

Away ran Felix, anxious about the red cow, for she was a favourite with all the family. When he reached the stepping-stone crossing of the beck, he was greatly amazed to see Katie, with her little bonnet on, who had just passed the water, and was then trudging up the road, as if fearful of being pursued. Felix, who was terrified at the idea of the child crossing the beck by herself, ran after her. "Where are ye boun', Katie, dear?" said he; but the child only laughed, and began to run too.

"Ye sall nae scape me, Katie," said he, catching hold of her.

"Let me gae!" said the child, pettishly; "I winna gae hame!"

"But where are ye gaeing?" asked Felix.

"I's gaeing to Nelly o' Rivelin, for some snaps" (small gingerbread cakes.) And here we ought to remark, that Nelly o' Rivelin, tired of the coolness which had grown up between the families, since the days of the broken shandry, had, of late, made advances towards a reconciliation. "Bring the pricks wi thee, and then thou can stop a bit," said she to Alice, a Sunday or two before; and Alice had accordingly done so, taking lile Katie with her. Nelly knew not how to make enough of her friend; and, while she put a "drap o' rum" in the mother's tea, to "make it mair nourishing," she feasted the child with snaps, for the making of which she was famous. Katie was mightily pleased with her entertainment; and this morning, the family being occupied about the ailing cow, she had stolen off, intending to make a visit to Nelly o' Rivelin, on her own account. The Rivelin was three miles from Gibb's Ha', and the child had advanced half way when Felix overtook her.

"Ye mustna gae, Katie," said Felix; "ye'r mother will be angry."

"She winna!" said Katie, pertinaciously—for she was used to have her own way.

"Does she know that ye are gaeing?" asked he.

"Ay!" returned the child.

Felix must have lost a full half hour, had he taken her back, and Christie might be angry; he knew not exactly what to do; he doubted if it were with the mother's knowledge that she had set off, but still she persisted that it was; so, snatching her up in his arms, he ran with her to the end of the lane which led to the Rivelin, intending to make all the more speed to regain the lost time, for he knew, when once at the Rivelin, she would be quite safe; and, from the lane end, it was direct, and scarcely a quarter of a mile.

"Run up th' loaning, and dinna stop pulling flowers, that's a dear," said Felix, as he set her down, and stood for a minute looking after her.

When he reached Dent-town, the cow-leech was not at home. There was a man, knowing in such business, however, living at the Dale-foot, about four miles further on, who had often been employed by Christie; and to him, therefore, Felix went, thinking



it a better alternative than waiting for the return of the other. The man at the Dale-foot had to be fetched from the fields, and it was late in the afternoon when he and Felix, who had ridden and tyed, that is, ridden the man's pony by turns, reached Gibb's Ha'. There Felix found the whole household in dismay; the cow was forgotten in the far greater distress of "lile Katie" being no where to be found. Felix told what he knew of the little maiden's movements; and, though all were amazed at such a proceeding, none doubted but she was safe with good-natured Nelly, who, the mother remembered, had promised her snaps whenever she would fetch them. It was therefore determined, that so soon as the red cow had been attended to, Christie should set off to the Rivelin, and fetch her back. The cow-leech and Christie sat down to "a mouthful o' supper and a drap o' drink," and it was getting towards sunset when Alice remonstrated on the delay.

"A weel now, Christie," she said, "I wish ye'd ha' done, for I's nae easy about the bairn."

Christie lingered yet a little while, to hear the end of a story which the cow-leech was telling, and then set off. Scarcely had he been gone an hour, when he and Matthey o' Rivelin returned, both looking full of alarm.

"She's nae there! nor has been there the

day!" exclaimed Christie; and Alice, with a quick scream, turned round to Felix, who was deliberately eating a particularly nice supper of Alice's preparing, and which even Peggy did not object to his having, because he had been to the Dale-foot, and had had no dinner. Felix dropped his spoon, and looked aghast, which Christie interpreted to his disadvantage. "Where's the bairn, ye young imp?" exclaimed he, shaking Felix violently by one arm.

"Tell us if ye know onything about her," said Alice, interposing, "and he sall nae thresh ye!"

"I know nae mair than I've told ye!" said Felix, pale and trembling; "she said, poor bairn, at the mother knawed where she was gaeing, and sae I carried her to the loanin-end."

"It was nae i' ye'r road!" exclaimed Christie, thinking he had convicted him of falsehood.

"Na mair it was; but I went sae far oot o' my way to take care o' her," replied Felix.

"Ye sud ha' brought her hame!" said Alice.

"Sae I would," returned he, "only I thought Christie wad be sae angry that I lost my time, and the cow sae badly."

"I's kill ye, as sure as ye leeve," exclaimed Christie, "if ye dinna tell the truth!"

"O I do! I do!" cried Felix.

"I think thou does!" said Matthey o' Rivelin, kindly; "I believe every word thou says; and I'll gae wi' Christie this varra minute, and we'll raise a' th' neeghbours o' that side th' dale, and find her if she's above ground, niver fear!"

"I'll gae wi' ye," said Felix, "and show ye where I left her, to an inch."

Felix pointed out the place where he had left her, and, a few paces onward in the lane, recognised the very flowers she carried in her hand when he left her; they had been thrown down, probably to gather fresh ones. About the middle of the lane, an old disused road turned to the right, and then, merging into a very indistinct track, led upwards to the fell-head. This road was the not infrequent halting-place of gipsies and wandering potters; perhaps such had been there this very day, and had carried her off. In the lane, however, they found no traces of such halt; but the idea having once been started, could not easily be dismissed. It was therefore proposed, that Matthey should mount his horse, and ride up the old road to the fell-head, and onward into Swale-dale, where was the prin-

cial residence of the gipsies and potters; and that two or three neighbours, who had joined them, should accompany Christie in another direction, none doubting but she would be found before long.

"Tae a mouthful o' summut," said Nelly o'Rivelin to poor Felix, who, almost tired to death, and full of dreadful anxiety, stood leaning in the porch, looking after Matthey, as he rode up the fell-side.

"I canna eat a bit, thank ye," returned he, "I's sae wae for the poor bairn; but I'll gae hame and up the gill; mappen she gaed back again, and lost hersel on our ain fell."

On his way back he met Mikky Hawes, and the three Hibblethwaites. "Is the bairn fand?" asked Mikky.

"Nae," replied Felix, with his eyes full of tears.

"I seed her mysel the morn," said Mikky. "I was after a stray sheep upo' Rivelin fell, and there she was, poor bairn, pulling a bits o' flowers, as blithe as a lark. 'Wha's bairn art ta?' says I. 'I's Katie o' Christie's o' Gibb's Ha',' says she, as pert as may be. 'Why a!' says I, 'ta sud na be here!' 'Nay, I's ganging to Nelly o' Rivelin for some snaps,' says she; and I thought she was staying wi' Nelly, and had run out back way, and

mappen Nelly hersel was na far off; sae I said nae mair."

"Nelly's niver seen her a' day," replied Felix, mournfully. Mikky and his friends said, therefore, that they would go again to the spot, for he could not think she could get very far off.

What a night of terrible anxiety that was! None but the children, at Gibb's Ha', and poor Gideon, went to bed. Alice, it is true, from sheer habit, took up her knitting once or twice, but soon laid it down again. She was far too uneasy to stay in the house, and several times took her lantern and went up into the pastures, and along the gill-side, where Felix had been before her, and down to the beck, calling the child's name, and starting at every sound, in the vain hope that it was her reply; and, ever and anon, upon the distant fells, might be seen the dim spark of lanterns which people carried, all occupied in the search; and in the stillness of the night, the bleating of the disturbed flocks, and even her name, as it was continually called, might be heard.

Towards morning, Christie, and those who had gone with him, returned, bringing no tidings, but still with the hope that she might have been recovered by some other party,

and brought home. But Alice's eager question, "Hae' ye fand her?" spoken ere they reached the door, told him that hope was vain. Nothing, however, was to be done but, spite of weariness, to renew the search; and accordingly Alice brought out refreshments, of which they stood greatly in need.

"I sall niver forgive Felix as lang's I leeve," said Christie.

"Ay," said Peggy Hibbledon, "lads is sae thoughtless; and he beats 'em a'! But for my part, I knaw na why ye had sae much to do wi' the Laws. Was na th' Maister i' some sort the death o' lile Johnny?"

"Nay, nay, Naunty," interrupted Alice, "ye're wrang there; naebody loved Johnny better than the Maister."

"Why a!" replied Peggy, "th' Maister was the last body as saw lile Johnny alive, and now Felix is th' last as knaws ought o' lile Katie! Waes to me! that comes o' taking ither folk's bairns under yan's ain roof-tree!"

"I's get rid o' him," said Christie, very determinedly.

"A weel!" said the neighbours, taking his part, "he is a farrantly bairn, and ye sud na be too rash, Christie; a varra good bairn is Felix, poor thing! and, as for Katie, please God, we'll find her to-morn!"

"Was na Kester o' Basin-gill's bairn fand

a skeleton in a peat-pot, six months after he was lost?" asked Peggy; and th' bairn as was lost i' Garstel, when I was a lass, was fand alive, but she died i' two days. Na, na! reckon upo' Katie when ye set eyes o' her!"

Alice began to cry afresh at these doleful prognostics, and Christie grew more angry than ever. Other neighbours now came in, and fresh plans of operation were laid. It was thought not improbable, that after the time when Mikky Hawes had seen her, that she had still ascended the fell, and gone down on the other side, where she might have been found and taken into some neighbouring dale. It was therefore agreed, that they should divide into parties of twos and threes; and, while their own dale was yet more narrowly to be searched by some, others should ride, with all speed, into the neighbouring dales, and rouse the inhabitants to the search also. In the course of the day every gill was traced on both sides the dale, and the beck, also, although it had been dragged the day before. The dale, from end to end, was all occupied by one feeling—compassion for the parents, and determination to find the child, either dead or living. Alice ran, like one distracted, place to place, repeating the inquiries sterday, but so distressed and agitated arcely to be able to speak; but all knew

her errand, and from all she met with sympathy and kindness. "Dinna greet sae," said one, "all our men are out upo' the fells, seeking her; and there's nae doubt but she'll soon be fand!" And "I'd gae wi' ye," said another, "only I've sent out our lads, and my husband's a-bed, poor man! and I canna leave th' house; but ye sall hae a drap o' summut afore ye gae, for I's sure I's wae for ye!"

All this time poor Felix, full of dreadful apprehension, was also in search of Katie; but, like the rest, his search was ineffectual. He had traversed many miles that day, and had scarcely eaten anything; when, as the evening drew on, he neared Gibb's Ha', hoping, as did every other party, that some one of the others had been more successful than themselves. In the course of this day, however, intelligence had been obtained of her by two different parties. The one had met a pedlar woman, who travelled from dale to dale with a flat basket of various wares. From her they heard, that she, that morning, had met a child crying for its mother, such as Katie was described, upon the old disused road near the Rivelin, and that, finding the child to be hungry, she had given her part of a loaf she had in her basket. She said she appeared much frightened.



and pointed to the Rivelin as her home, and in that direction she was going. The other party learnt, that in the afternoon of that day, a child had also been heard crying, at about two miles on the *other side* the Rivelin. A man who was cutting peat heard her, but, supposing it to be merely a child who had passed by with a beggar woman some time before, he had taken no notice of it. This information, vague as it was, however gave new life to the pursuit.

There were, at least, a dozen neighbours in the house when Felix entered. There was meat and drink on the table, and all who were disposed for refreshment took it, even without being invited; for, so wholly absorbed were the household by alarm and distress, that there was no ceremony. Nobody spoke to Felix, and he saw too plainly what was the truth, to ask a question from any one. The children of the family were all in bed; but he was too weary to go up stairs, and stretched himself, therefore, on two chairs, and, before he was aware, had fallen into one of those dead sleeps which excessive fatigue, either of body or mind, produces. The search, in the meantime, had not relaxed. The dale and the fell-sides were still alive with parties, who were abroad with dogs and lanterns; it being the general belief now, that

the child had fallen into some peat-pot, or deep stony gill, and had perished. Alice sat by the hearth, believing herself awake, but in truth sleeping, miserable woman as she was, till the fire had almost died out, and the pale light of early morning stole in through the window-curtain. Felix awoke, cold and stiff, not only from the excessive fatigue of the last two days, but from his uneasy resting-place, and with a heavy sense of unspeakable wretchedness at his heart. He knew that, in some sort, he was reckoned instrumental in the loss of the child, blameless as he was; and, in the agony of his spirit, he prayed that he might be the means of her restoration. Somewhat relieved by this outpouring of his secret feeling, he raked together the peats which lay on the hearth, and revived the fire: the first movement roused Alice; then was breakfast prepared, that no daylight might pass unemployed. Every moment was now precious, for no one attempted to deceive themselves as to the chance of the child's life holding out much longer, even supposing her still alive. In the melancholy apprehension, however, that she had perished, every rugged fell-side, every gill, and every peat-pot in the dale began to be more narrowly examined; while other parties rode into Garsdale, Bar-

bendale, and Swaledale, to assist the inhabitants there in a similar search.

Alice, with some of her neighbours, went in one direction, and Felix, taking his dog with him, set forth alone, intending to go to the Rivelin fells, where Mikky Hawes had seen her. On his way he overtook Mikky himself, who said he would accompany him, although he, and two of his neighbours, had gone over the fells the day before. As they passed the Rivelin, Nelly ran out to tell them that Matthey had found, about an hour before, one of her little shoes on the fell-head; and, about a mile further on, on the very ridge of the fell, one of her socks hung upon a low bramble-bush, as if to dry; and that he and Christie were now gone on, with renewed hope, not doubting but she had wandered along the ridge, or perhaps gone down the other side into the next dale. "I's got a feather bed upo' th' hearth, and warm blankets ready," said Nelly; "and I hae sent our Richard over to Gibb's Ha', to tell her mother, poor body."

Mikky and Felix were overjoyed; and they now came to a deliberation, whether they should take the same route the others had done, or, according to their original intention, search the fells; "for," said Mikky,

"she'd mappen turn back again, poor bewil-  
dered cretur." Nelly thought it not unlikely,  
and they turned to the fells. The Rivelin  
fell-side was the wildest in all the dale, full  
of crags and little ravines; while the fell-  
head was one wide peat-moss, and the whole  
would occupy many hours in the search.

Towards noon they came to the stony bed  
of a gill, which, in winter time, was filled with  
a strong flow of water, but now was dry. It  
was overgrown with bushes, and lay deep  
and dark in the hollow of a ravine. What  
was Felix's inexpressible joy, and, at the  
same time, dread, to see, upon the strong  
brambles, a rag of her little pinafore hanging!  
Mikky put on his spectacles, to examine the  
torn edge, which, to the joy of both, he pro-  
nounced so recent, that not even the dews of  
the last night could have been upon it.  
Felix's heart beat violently; and, with the  
dreadful apprehension that she might have  
fallen into that fearful gill, he scrambled  
down, thankful to see no traces of her, and  
yet dreading to advance, lest every step  
might discover her dead body. Up the gill,  
however, he went, to the very spot where an  
abrupt wall of stone barred further progress;  
then down the gill again, while Mikky went  
with him, step by step, carefully examining  
the bushes along the upper margin, encou-

raging the dog, to whom they had shown the tattered piece of the pinafore, to the search also.

They traced the gill for about a quarter of a mile, and then they had left the peat, and come into that part of the fell which was broken with scattered crags, and overgrown with bushes of gorse and broom, and short ancient thorn-trees; here the dog turned abruptly to the left, and commenced following a scent. Mikky and Felix, instantly leaving the gill, followed the dog among the bushes. Presently the dog, which was considerably in advance of them, commenced a cheerful bark, and, rushing eagerly forward, no words can describe their joy, when they beheld the form of the little child lying on the ground, as if she had stumbled over the low scrubby roots of broom! The first thought of Mikky, however, was that she was dead; for the joyous barking of the dog, and their own voices, did not rouse her, but he forbore to say so; while Felix, overpowered at the sight, threw himself on the ground, and burst into a passion of tears. Not a word did the old man say, but slowly lifted her from the ground. She had neither stockings nor shoes on, and her legs and feet were swollen and bloody; she had no bonnet on her head, and her thick hair was tangled

and wet; and her formerly round, and rosy face, was pale, and smeared with dirt and traces of tears, and her whole body stiff and cold, and, to all appearance, dead. At sight of so piteous an object, Mikky himself could not help weeping. Felix leapt up, and, taking hold of her hand, which he found so cold and stiff, danced about in an agony of grief. The next moment Mikky had stripped off his coat, and then his waistcoat, in both of which he wrapped her, and then, bidding Felix follow, made what speed he could to the Rivelin.

"Dinna greet sae, bairn," said Mikky, after a few minutes, and in a cheerful voice; "she is nae dead! Bless the Lord, I hae felt her stir! Rin on, and tell Nelly to hae th' bed and blankets ready; and, please God, she'll soon come to hersel!"

Felix did not need telling a second time, but, shouting at the highest pitch of his voice, "She's fand! she's fand!" ran forward to the Rivelin, while the joyful cry, borne onward by the wind, conveyed the glad tidings to many people on the hill-side.

"Ye wad na be mair welcome if ye were an angel from heaven!" said Nelly, as she met the old man at the door. "Gie th' poor bairn to me, and sit ye down, for ye're out o' breath."

Mikky sat down, and Nelly laid the child, wrapt in plenty of warm blankets, on the feather bed on the hearth. Some weak tea, "wi' a drap o' rum in it," as Mikky counselled, was poured in, drop by drop, between her clenched teeth, while Felix, kneeling down beside her, gently rubbed her hands and feet. In about a quarter of an hour she slowly opened her eyes, but without recognising anything. Felix kissed her, and again burst into tears, whilst Nelly asked him "why he greeted, for the poor bairn was coming round."

"I canna tell why," replied Felix, smiling, while the tears were running down his cheeks; "but I am sae glad, I canna help greeting!"

"Why a ! now," said Mikky, "I'll be gang-ing."

"Ye sall hae a horse," said Nelly, "and ride to Gibb's Ha', with the news to poor Nelly; its fitting she knawed."

Mikky saddled Matthey's horse, and away he rode, at such a rate as would have made the quiet dales-folk think him drunk or mad, had he not everywhere spread the joyful intelligence, that "he and th' Maister's bairn had fand lile Katie!" If ill news flies quickly, so does good news; and, in some mysterious manner, though nobody could tell how, the

glad tidings had entered the house at Gibb's Ha' before Mikky himself. Such of the household as were within were all alert, and Alice was throwing on her cloak and bonnet, when Mikky rushed in, altogether forgetful of the feud between himself and the Swithenbanks, exclaiming "A weel, the bairn's safe and sound! Th' Maister's bairn and I fand her." "Ay," replied Peggy, as if she were half sorry it were so, "them as hides can find!"

Neither Mikky nor Alice noticed the insinuation; and Alice, springing upon the horse which Mikky had ridden, regardless of the man's saddle, which, in fact, would matter nothing to a thorough-bred daleswoman, rode away to the Rivelin, with even more speed than Mikky himself had used.

---

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### LEAVE-TAKING.

Two events had occurred during these three days, but they excited no attention—the red cow died, and a letter from London arrived. On the evening of the day, however, on which Katie was found, the rite of sepulture was



performed upon the unfortunate quadruped; but it was not till the next morning that Christie observed the letter, which had been stuck into the usual depository of letters and loose papers—the cross iron bar of the window—and, taking it out, turned it first on one side, and then on the other, examined the seal, peeped into the ends, as if he had not himself permission to open it, scratched his head, said, in an undervoice, that he supposed it was from Maister Le Smith, and took it out with him to read.

The truth was, that the active and affectionate interest which Felix had taken in the recovery of lile Katie, had not been unobserved by Christie himself; and, besides this, the attachment which the child showed to him—for even at this moment, while he held the letter in his hand, Felix was sitting by the little bed which had been made for her on the settle, holding the hand which she had placed in his, and if he but stirred from her sight, her feeble, inarticulate voice, was heard calling him to return. Nothing but the strong constitution of a dale child could have survived those three days' and two nights' exposure upon the fells. But the Katie that returned home, was not like the one that stole away three days before, with a

laughing and rosy countenance, and full of health and strength. It seemed as if an illness of many weeks had passed over her. Her voice was inaudible; her eyes dim and hollow, and her cheeks pale and wasted; nor had she even strength to raise her head on the pillow; and so great must have been the terror and bewilderment of the time, that she could recall no single incident, nor give any account of her wandering. All she seemed to desire, after the first inordinate craving of hunger was appeased, was to be still, and have Felix near her. No wonder was it, therefore, that the very sight of the London letter seemed to reproach the father, and that he did not feel greatly disposed to open it in his presence.

"However," thought he, as he went out, "perhaps the man declines having him; and, if so, why he shall e'en stay with us, for he's not much worse than other bairns, after all; only," said he to himself, with vehemence, "I's nae have him ganging to Linn's Gill, that I winna, ony how!" With this resolve, Christie again turned to the letter and read the address, "Christopher Swithenbank, Esq., Gibb's Hall, Dent-dale, Yorkshire." "Not quite reeght that," said he; "but, however, nae matter, let's see what's inside; and, by dint of half tearing the letter, he got it open,

and in about an hour, after much puzzling and spelling, made out the contents as follows:—

“DEAR SIR,                      “London, September 9th, 183—

“I fear I must have appeared negligent in not replying to your favour, which bears date six weeks ago; but the fact is, it was addressed to a residence which I have left some years, and was, therefore, thus long before it came to hand. My present address is, ‘Theodore Le Smith, Esq., General Post Office, London. (To be called for.)’

“I am truly sorry to be apprized of the death of my worthy relative, for whom I entertained the profoundest respect, as did every one who had the honour of his acquaintance. My family is small, having but one child; so that this young relative (whose sex, however, you do not tell us,) will be an acceptable addition to it, and will be very satisfactory to Mrs. Le Smith, whose fondness for children is proverbial.

“The coach would be much preferable to the waggon, as a mode of conveyance, and cheaper also, the child being consigned to the care of any elderly passenger, or coachman, or guard; which is done every day.

“Forty pounds is a small allowance for the education, board, &c. of a child; but, whatever is wanted additional, I shall esteem

it an honour to lay down. The first half year's payment, a £20 bank bill, which you may obtain at any bankers, you had better enclose in your next, which informs me by what coach the child will be sent.

"The North Briton Coach leaves Kendal every morning, and drives to the Bull and Mouth, Aldersgate; which will suit very well, being just by the Post Office.

"Mrs. Le Smith begs that her compliments may be presented to our young relative.

"I am, dear sir, your very humble and obedient servant,

"THEODORE LE SMITH."

All inexperienced as Christie o' Gibbs Ha' was in epistolary correspondence, there was something about this letter that he did not like; perhaps it was the writer's urgency to obtain the £20 bill; but he could not exactly tell. He read it, therefore, again. Mrs. Le Smith was fond of children; that was very good; and, as to the £20 bill, it could not be that he was eager to get hold of it for his own ends, because he professed himself willing to lay down whatever more than the forty pounds was needed. "No doubt," thought he, "they are gert gentlefolk, and live in a 'spensive way;" and besides that, he had always heard that living was dear in

London. "Weel a weel, he must gae, I reckon," was the winding up of his cogitation, "for I promised Naunty he should, and she winna bide being baulked!"

Christie delayed to answer the London letter, for he still, as day after day went on, felt a wavering in his severe intentions towards Felix; when, unfortunately, Mikky Hawes, with the kindest intentions in the world, again decided his prejudices. Mikky thought that, considering the part he had in restoring Katie, her father, no doubt, would be disposed to a more friendly conduct towards him, and that he would therefore again attack him respecting Felix, for whom he entertained a strong affection; so, seeing Christie one day, soon after, at work in his fields, he went up to him and renewed the subject.

"It's nae quite the thing," said he, "to send the bairn among strangers; it would freegthen him out o's wits; ye must na do it, Christie!"

All the old ill will at once came over Christie. "I know," said he, "Maister Hawes, that ye reckon me under an obligation to ye, because ye fand th' bairn; now, if money will clear me, name the sum, and I'll pay it; or, if there's ony other way, let me know it!"

"There is!" said Mikky, joyfully; "give Felix up to me, and dinna send him a' that way off!"

"I may as well speak plain to ye at once, Maister Hawes," replied Christie. "I've nae mind to be dictated to by ye! What I've said I'll do, I'll do! and I'm nae but fulfilling the Maister's will in sending him to Lunnon; and it's nae business o' yours, nor nobody's else; and I will na be interfered wi'!"

"Weel a weel," returned Mikky, "take ye'r ain way! but ane word I *will* speak—in anither o' ye'r bairns were lost, I'd seek it to-morn; but neither for your sake, nor yet for Peggy Hibbledon's! And I'll tell ye mair—if ye banish that poor fatherless bairn, the worse I wish ye is, that ye may hae grace to see how ye've sold ye'r good name, and made ye'rsel a scandal i' a' th' dale!" And, striking his stout stick upon the ground, he repeated that he wished it, with all his heart, and walked away in a very bad humour.

Christie's mind was now made up, and he felt it rather like a relief at the moment, for he was worked up to the proper pitch for doing disagreeable business. "A varra decent, weel-spoken man, seems this Maister Le Smith to be," said he to his wife, trying to impose even upon his own feelings, "and

a varra comfortable hame is Felix likely to have, for the Missis is varra fond of children, and, poor thing, has but ane o' her own; and Lunnon's a-varra fine place, as I've heard."

"Why a! why a!" exclaimed Alice, who hoped her husband had abandoned the idea, "ye canna think o' sending him a' that way, among strangers; him that has been like ane o' our own bairns! Ye canna hae the heart to do it, Christie!"

"I promised Naunty," was his reply; "and, after all, I dinna think but he'll be varra comfortable!"

"I canna think," said Alice, "why Naunty has taken such a misliking to him, poor bairn!"

"I've said it!" returned Christie, determined to strengthen himself, as many men do in a bad argument, by getting into a passion. "I've said it, and it sall be done! He's getting above my hand, ony how; and that oud prating fool, Mikky Hawes, must be melling (meddling) atween him and me! He sall gae, and then there'll mappen be peace!"

A long controversy followed. Alice grew angry, as well as her husband, and then Peggy Hibbledon was referred to by Christie; and the last words of Peggy's argument were, "that she niver liked nane o' th' Laws; they

were a mighty set-up family, as thought themselves better than their neebours; and, as for th' Maister's wife, she was a foreigner, that naebody knawed; and Felix was desperately like her; and th' lang and short was, either he or she should leave Gibb's Ha'; and, if she left, every penny she was worth should go to Richard and his bairns, where, after a', it 'ud mappen do maist good!"

Such an argument as this was very conclusive, and even Alice reluctantly confessed its weight. "A weel, poor bairn," said she, "if he must gae, it sall be wi' this understanding, that if he is na comfortable he sall come back again; and I's sorry to think o' his going in ony fly-away coach. I sall na sleep i' my bed, to think we have not only sent him away from's own natteral country, but put 's poor neck i' danger o' top o' one o' them coaches! But he sall gang like a decent man's bairn, wi' Willy Parrington, i' th' butter-cart, to Manchester, and Willy will see him upo' some safe coach, if safe coach there be; or if I thought he would na, I'd e'en gang mysel wi' him to Manchester, and see him off wi' my ain eyes; and a sore day it 'll be for me when he gaes, poor bairn!"

Christie wrote to Mr. Le Smith, informing him that the bairn, which was a lad-bairn,



would set off from Dent-dale that day fortnight, and, in five days thereafter, would be in London, without fail; and that he would go by the stage coach from Manchester, which went to the Belle Sauvage, where he must be met, as he would be a stranger in London. The stage waggon would have been "mair safe," he said, but they were all done away with now, which was a great pity; and he would carry with him also, safely stitched into the lining of his waistcoat, a half year's rent, as desired, which would be much safer than sending by letter, which might so easily be lost.

Of Felix's own feelings, respecting this removal, we will say no more than, that he was very averse to it. He had divers little schemes in his mind, to avoid it, and, among others, to run away to Linn's Gill, and get Mikky Hawes to detain him forcibly; for he knew whatever the old man could do, either to please him or to vex Christie, he would do with thorough good will. This he thought of morning, noon, and night; till at length, won by Alice's affectionate attentions, he resolved upon winning her consent to it, as he had done to the shearing supper. But Alice's consent was not to be won this time. "Nay, nay; dinna do sa," she said; "Christie would amaist kill ye. Gae and see ye'r

Lunnon kin—ye'r ain mother's kin—and she were a varra good woman; and if ye dinna like them, or they are na kind to ye, ye sall come back. Dinna mae Christie angry, pray ye; and ye sall hae new clothes; I'll gae mysel to Sedbur', and buy ye good broad-claith, and Tommy Allen sall come and mae them; and Tommy and Ralph sall hae new suits too; and he sall mend up Christie's claithes, for they're sadly out o' repair; and I'll mend your linen, and get ye a dozen pair o' new stockings o' my ain knitting, and a comforter, and a pair o' worsted gloves, for I mind th' winter's coming on; and ye sall hae a good big-coat wi' a cape to it, and a new hat and shoes, for ye sall na shame ye'r new Lunnon kin, poor bairn! though, what is to become o' lile Katie, when ye're gone, is mair than I can say! And ye sall hae a part of a ham boiled, and a good wheaten loaf, and a big bottle o' beer, and a lile bottle o' elder-wine, and a bit o' cheese, and some nice oat cakes, to tae wi' ye to eat upo' th' road, for its hungry work, travelling! And be sure and write when ye get there; and if ye dinna like 'em, tae notice where th' coach puts up, and come back; for I's sure I's wae to part wi' ye, for ye're like my ain bairn; and, but for Naunty, ye should na gae; but oud folk

are fanciful, and must hae their ain way. But dinna greet; for wae's me, my ain heart is a sair ane!"

Alice did all she promised: she bought him new clothes, which Tommy Allen, the dale tailor, made for him; she mended his linen, and knit him a dozen new pair of stockings, a pair of gloves, and a comforter; he had a new great-coat and hat, a new pair of shoes, and his old ones patched at the toes. He was, in the estimation of every one, extraordinarily well provided for. Half a large ham was boiled, a wheaten loaf made; the nicest oat cakes selected; a large triangle of cheese was cut; the beer and the elder wine, all were ready, and packed in a large basket; and his oaken chest, containing his wardrobe, was brought down stairs. He put on his hitherto Sunday suit, into the waistcoat lining of which Alice carefully stitched two £10 Kendal bank notes, and he had thirty shillings' worth of silver in his pocket, out of which he was to pay his travelling expenses.

Such being the state of affairs, our readers of course will suppose that the time of his departure was at hand. It was, in fact, the last day of the fortnight; he had slept his last sleep at Gibb's Ha', and was to sleep the following night at Willy Parrington's, at the

dale-foot, that he might be ready for his early journey, Willy setting off at three o'clock in the morning.

Poor Felix! to use the true dale phrase, "his heart was wae." He had taken leave of the Rivelin folk, and of the Hodgsons, and the Hibblethwaites; and had even stolen up to say good-bye to Mikky and Elsy Hawes; and was now come back to have tea, and then Christie was to drive him in the cart to the dale-foot. He had given his dog in charge to Ralph, and his goose, his famous "Peggy Punch," to "lile Katie," and there seemed now nothing left to do, but the most sorrowful of all—to part.

"I's two or three words to say to thee, poor dear!" said Alice, as she opened the door at the bottom of the stairs, and motioned him to her. She took him into her own chamber, and shut the door. "I' this press," said she, pointing to a large one, which had been removed from Peggy Hibbledon's chamber, "are a' thy mother's clothes, poor thing! and in three others, that stand about th' house, are a power o' good table and bed-linen, and plate and crockery, a' varra good; and those two pictures upo' Gideon's bed—they are thine! Ivery year I tae a' out th' drawers and presses, and see as a's reeght and dry, and

put 'em by again; and I sall do sae still. And upo' this pillow," said she, unlocking a drawer and taking one out, "ye'r poor, dear mother's head was laid when she died. Wae's me! I dinna think either she or th' Maister would like ye'r leaving us!"—and both she and Felix wept. "But it's nae use greeting," she said, at length, "th' Maister, poor man, would na even lay his ain head upo' this pillow afterwards; he told me why it was sae dear to him, and I promised I would keep it away from ony bed; and when I delivered the things up to ye, I would tell ye a' about it! And now, poor dear, I'll just say again what I've oft said before, come back, if ye dinna like 'em, or if they are nae kind to ye, for I's sure a curse would leeght upon us, if we turned our backs upon ye! And remember, Felix dear, a' the good advice ye'r ain father gave ye, and say ye'r prayers! Dinna forget God, poor bairn, and he winna forget ye! And I's put ye'r mother's Bible—it's varra good print—into ye'r box; and all ye'r father's books I'll tae good care of—the bairns sall na hae 'em to pull about. O! it'll be a sad house when ye're out of it!"

"Dinna let me go!" said Felix, sobbing bitterly; "I's sure I dinna want to gae—I's varra fond o' ye all!"

"Ye'll break my heart if ye talk sae," said

Alice, crying herself with no less emotion; "but nay, nay—gae and see 'em—they're ye'r ain kin—ye'r ain mother's kin, and canna hae the heart to misuse ye!"

The tea was a very mournful meal; nobody could eat anything, excepting Peggy Hibbledon—not even Christie. Gideon sat and cried; and, it having been thought too severe a trial for "lile Katie," she had been carried up to the Rivelin, to be out of the way. On the plea of seeing if the horse was ready, although he had made him ready himself, half an hour before, Christie left the table; and, no sooner was he gone, than Gideon got up, and, touching Felix's shoulder, beckoned him to the back door, and then, taking from behind the pump a walking stick, which the poor creature had, with great labour and no little ingenuity, notched and carved with his knife, put it into his hand. "I's poor Gideon—poor Gideon," said he; "tae that!" and then, bursting into a passion of child-like grief, he ran into the cow-shed. This, then, was poor Gideon's keepsake, and Felix was in no humour, at that moment, to be unmoved. He began to think what he, too, could give to him; his dog and his goose were disposed of; he felt in his pockets—there was nothing but his knife, and to give a knife

was unlucky; and, while he stood in this dilemma, Christie's voice was heard, sternly announcing that "a' was ready, and it would be neeght afore they set off;" so, brushing away his tears as well as he could, he went back into the kitchen, with his new stick in his hand.

In three or four minutes the cart, and Christie, and Felix, and the great basket of eatables, and the box of clothes, were jogging down the hill; and Alice and the children were all standing at the garden gate, looking after them with tears in their eyes; and poor Gideon was crying among the dry fern, which was laid up for fodder, more bitterly than ever.

Christie spoke no word for the greater part of the way, and then, without turning to him, said he "hoped he was warmly wrapped, for the neeghts were noo getting cold." Felix thanked him, and said he was; and so they drove on to Willy Parrington's. "And noo, fare-ye-weel!" said he, after he had delivered his possessions into the trusty hands of Willy, and renewed all needful instructions to him, respecting Felix's London journey; "fare-ye-weel, and God bless ye! ye's been a good bairn, after a', and I's wae I threshed ye!"

Christie's kind words completely overcame

## FIRST PART OF A LONG JOURNEY. 143

Felix's determination to "greet nae mair," and he could not help thinking that it was very hard, if all liked him so, that he must leave them.

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE FIRST PART OF A LONG JOURNEY.

It was brightly starlight, at three o'clock on Tuesday morning, the 17th of October, when the little covered cart, with its strong but lightly-built grey horse, started from Willy Parrington's door. Willy was a butter-buyer in the dale, and went every week to Manchester with his purchases. He was, moreover, the regular carrier of light parcels and letters, and had room, beside, for one passenger.

As they drove along, every now and then they were stopped at some lane-end, or gate, or public-house, by those who had commissions for Willy. "I's get ye to tae this bundle o' yarn to Mally Saterthwaite, o' Casterton," said one, "and ye's hae fourpence for ye'r trubble." And, "Pray ye now, Willy, gae to see our Bet, as ye gang through Kirby Lonsda'," said another; "we's heard she been but badly, and she's no but



a weakly body, sae it'll be mair satisfaction if ye'll see her ye'rsel; and we's gie ye a quart o' drink!" "Here's twelve shilling and ninepence, I's get ye to pay for twine and tenpenny-nails, to Maister Wilson, o' th' High-street, i' Lankester," said Mrs. Thistlethwaite, a wayside shopkeeper, as, with her nightcap on, and a candle in her hand, she hailed the butter-buyer, out of her chamber window; and then, tying the little packet to the end of a piece of grey worsted, let it down to him as he sat in his cart; "and mind ye, tae a receipt from him," said she, as they drove off again.

The sun shone brightly, and there was an exhilarating freshness and transparency of the atmosphere, that had a sensible effect upon the spirits, as, at seven o'clock in the morning, they entered the pleasant valley of the Lune. Felix, who had never been, in his whole life, farther from the dales than Hawes and Sedburgh, could not resist that most natural wonder of inexperienced travellers, that the world was so wide. At Casterton they made their first halt, and Felix, after assaying his ham and new loaf, which he accompanied by a mess of oatmeal porridge, furnished by the landlady, went out with Willy to deliver the bundle of yarn, and receive other commissions. After an

hour's rest, the little covered cart and the grey horse set off again. They went rattling through the cheerful little town of Kirby Lonsdale, leaving the needful inquiry after "Bet," to Willy's return; and, soon after, came in sight of Morecomb Bay, which, resplendent with sun-light, shone out to the right; beyond which, the rugged shores of Cartmell, and Ulverston, and Walney Isle, with its lighthouse, were distinctly visible. Felix had read of the sea, but he had formed no definite idea of what it was like; and his exclamation, "O, Willy, what a gert tarn!" threw the old man into a fit of laughter.

"It's nae a tarn, bairn," said he, "it's the sea! Yon's Morecomb Bay, and th' other side is a' Cartmel and Ulverston Sands; and lower down, is Lankester Bay; and yon's Lankester Castle at stands upo' th' rock, bigger than ony kirk tower!"

It was quite dusk when they drove through Lancaster; and they only halted to pay "the twelve shilling and nine pence, and tae the receipt;" but the gas-lights in the streets, and the smart shop windows, all lighted up, and people, and carriages, and carts passing along the streets—although Lancaster is not a busy town—astonished and almost bewil-

dered Felix. "I should soon be lost in such a gert place," said he.

"Gert place, ca' ye it?" replied Willy, "it's nobut a village to Manchester; and Lunnon, I've heard say, is as big as ten Manchesters!"

Felix's heart quite sank within him, for he felt that, from a place so large, there would be no chance of his ever getting; and, for the first time in the course of the day, he leaned back in the cart and shed tears.

The grey horse, which, for the last many miles, had gone wearily, now began to amend his pace; for, like the thirsty camel, that smells water, he knew that his place of rest was near. It was at the village of Scotforth, some three miles from Lancaster, that they halted for the night. Felix toasted his oat-cake at the kitchen fire of the little public house there, and, to keep out the cold, and mend his sleep, as Willy recommended, had a basin of mulled beer, and went to bed. At half past two in the morning, the thread, or rather the cable, of his sleep was suddenly snapped in two, though not without difficulty, by Willy Parrington, who, with his red woollen nightcap on his head, and a candle in his hand, told him it was time to be moving.

This day's journey was not unlike the last. It was starlight when they set out; they had the sea on their right hand, as daylight broke upon them, and, to their left, the high bleak extent of Bleasdale Moor; which sent back his thoughts and affections to his native fells. They breakfasted at Garstang, passed through the pleasant town of Preston, with its green meadows, on the banks of the beautiful Ribble, in the afternoon; and again, at nightfall, halted at a way-side public house, five miles short of Chorley. Again, at three o'clock in the morning, after a five hours' rest, they set forth, and breakfasted at the village of Dunbury. In the afternoon they drove through Bolton Le Moors. Here poor Felix fell into a mournful train of thought; for, as he passed through the greater and the less Bolton, with their swarming populations, that saddest of all sensations came over him, that, amid the thousands where he was going, all would be strangers; he felt forlorn and deserted, and a sense of loneliness lay heavy on his heart; and especially so, as, within a few hours, he must part from Willy Parring-ton, the last tie between him and his beloved dale friends. These were not feelings which the approach to a noisy, bustling, and smoky manufacturing town, at night-fall, was likely

to abate. They drove through Salford, a large town, in Felix's opinion, and yet, Willy told him it was only the beginning of Manchester. Presently the streets became more thronged; the rumble of heavy wains, and the rattle of lighter vehicles, and the rushing past of crowded omnibusses, and cabs, and coaches; the crowds of people that were passing on the pavements; the flaring lights in the shop windows; the numerous seven-storied factories, every one of their numerous windows a-light from within; the babel of human voices, and the jangle and roar of machinery, all created such a confusion and whirl in the poor lad's brain, that, whether he was alive or not, was more than he could tell. He remembered, however, Willy's saying, that London was bigger than ten Manchesters, and, in dismay, he closed his eyes, endeavouring, by obscuring his outward vision, to get rid of the overwhelming idea.

After having threaded, with wonderful adroitness, some of the busiest streets in Manchester, Willy turned into a quiet by-lane, and presently stopped at the sign of the Harrow, kept, he said, "by a dales-woman, a varra graidly body." Willy was a kind, good soul, and, knowing how tired Felix was, he had a quarter of an hour's talk with his

country-woman, mostly about making "the bairn" comfortable, before he rubbed down and bedded his horse; and then went out to see after the London stages. The landlady, whose very heart was gladdened by the sound of the dale tongue, made Felix, in his own opinion, as comfortable as a king's son; having extracted from him, nevertheless, all the news that he could tell of any of the dales.

He was woke from the most profound of sleeps by Willy, as on former mornings, but not till four o'clock; and then, after "a right comfortable" dale breakfast, they set off to the Palace Hotel, whence the coach started. By the way, Felix commissioned the old man with messages to all his dale friends, not forgetting Mikky and Elsy Hawes; he then inquired what would be the cost of a smart cotton handkerchief for the neck; Willy thought about a shilling or fourteen pence; and Felix, giving him half-a-crown, desired him to buy such a one for Gideon; and "tell him," said he, "to wear it on Sundays, for my sake; and, wi' th' change, buy some gingerbread and spice-cake for Ralph, and lile Katie, and th' other bairns." Willy promised to do so; and, by this time, they had threaded a dozen narrow streets, and passed

along half a dozen broad ones, and now arrived at the inn, where no less than three other coaches also, some going north, and others south, were about to start. It was a scene of animation and bustle, such as Felix had not witnessed before. The broad street seemed almost filled by the coaches, and those whom they had drawn together. There were waiters from the inn, seeing that well-paying guests were comfortably seated; there were porters, old and young, trotting along, and bending under heavy luggage of all descriptions—portmanteaus, carpet-bags, leather trunks, and deal-boxes, and the owners themselves bustling up after; gentlemen great-coated, with cloaks over their arms, and ladies muffled up in silk cloaks, with boas about their necks, all impatient of time; and, besides these, were early street-loungers, not a few, who had stopped on their onward way, to see the four coaches start upon their several routes.

Although there were four coaches to hold them, Felix wondered how so many people who had presented, and were presenting themselves as claimants for room, could ever have seats found for them; and something like this fear must have crossed Willy Parrington's mind also, for he said, "Ye'd mappen

better mae sure o' ye'r seat, while there's ony room left. I see ye'r basket and ye'r box safe i' th' coach office; I carried 'em up last night mysel: and sae just let me help ye up. Nay, this is ye'r coach," said he, seeing Felix go up to the one that was bound for Carlisle; "and I know the driver; he's a Kendal man, and a varra graidly body; and I's told him about ye, and he'll mae friends for ye wi' th' other coachman as taes his place for th' neight, at Leicester; and I's paid ye'r fare, and gied him two shillings for's trubble; and here's ye'r change, just half a crown, and put it safe i' ye'r pocket. Now get up! ye'll sit behind mair safe—there! beside that decent young woman i' th' plaidy shawl;—now keep the middle o' th' seat! Be sae ob-leeging, will ye, sir," said he, to a stout, respectable-looking person, who, according to the amount of the fee, would have been *gentleman* or *man* with the coachman, and who slowly mounted, as soon as Felix was seated, "as to let th' bairn hae th' middle o' th' seat." The reply was, that he certainly would. "Ye's mappen ganging a' th' way to Lunnon?" said Willy. "I am!" was the reply; "have you any commissions?" "Why, sir," returned Willy, "th' bairn's ganging there too, and he's niver been fra hame



152 FIRST PART OF A LONG JOURNEY.

afore; and ye's mappen speak a kind word to him, noo and then!" The stranger said that he would, and looked at Felix, and smiled kindly.

This being thus arranged, very much to Willy's satisfaction, he saw the oaken box safely deposited in the back boot, of which he did not fail to apprize the owner, and had the basket, containing the remains of the eatables, and the two bottles, put within reach, on the top of the coach.

The stable-boys now were putting forth their hands to slide off the clothes from the horses, the moment the coachman, who was on his box, had gathered up his reins; and Willy's voice addressed Felix with a "Fare-ye-weel, bairn! fare-ye-weel, and a good journey to ye!" It was with a husky voice that Felix replied; but it did not matter; the sound would have been lost, had it been ever so clear, in the clattering starting off of four coaches at one and the same moment.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE SECOND PART OF A LONG JOURNEY,  
AND THE JOURNEY'S END.

It was a very uneventful journey, at least inasmuch as no horse was killed, no passenger fell off the coach, no wheel took fire, and the axle-tree did not break. Poor Alice might have spared all her fears; and so Felix thought, for after the first five minutes, when he had somewhat accustomed his eye to the rapid succession of objects, he began to think it very pleasant, and to find great amusement in seeing houses, bridges, churches, nay, even woods and fields, wearing aspects quite different to anything in Dent-dale. It was vastly preferable to Willy Parrington's cart, because he had so much more clear and extended a view over the country. The young woman, too, in the tartan shawl, was very pretty, and very much disposed to be friendly, and the stout person on his right was even more so. He talked with Felix about almost everything they saw; told him the towns they went through, and the names of the gentlemen whose seats they passed. And when they stopped for dinner, at the pretty little Derbyshire town of Bakewell, he

insisted that Felix should dine. Felix, like a prudent lad, thought of his finances, and said that he had plenty in his basket. "Non-sense!" said his stout friend, "that's lasted, you say, for the last three days—I'll pay for your dinner!" It would be ungracious, Felix thought, to demur any longer, and therefore he had a dinner at the cost of him, who seemed not only to have plenty of money, but who also seemed to like the doing of a kind action, and shall therefore be called the stout *gentleman*.

No whit abating of his kindness, although Felix had cost him three shillings, they reached Leicester at eight o'clock, where everybody took tea, and made preparations for the night-journey. Old gentlemen tied down the ears of their travelling caps, and put on their extra coats and cloaks; ladies twined their boas twice round their necks, and tied the ends; and those female travellers on the outside, who only claimed the appellation of *women*, took out such shawls or warm woollen handkerchiefs as they had brought for the purpose, and disposed them about their heads or their persons, as, according to their notions, would best keep out the night air. "We shall have a cold ;," said the stout gentleman to the young an, Felix's left hand companion, who

now stood with them in the little parlour, where the outside passengers had taken their tea, "and I hope you have plenty of wrapping!" But he need have had no fear about her, for she had produced, from somewhere, a large fur tippet, which she was just then putting on, and over which she threw, the next moment, a very warm and well-lined cloak. "Oh, you'll do, I see," said he; "I was going to offer you my mackintosh. And how are you off, my little friend?" said he, turning to Felix, who was again tying on the red comforter, which he had taken from his neck while he had his tea; "Have you nothing beside this?" said he, eying the red comforter with something like disdain. "My coat's very warm, sir," replied Felix, feeling almost chivalrous about the clothes which his friend Alice had provided for him. "Phoo! phoo!" replied the stout traveller, and, the next moment, he forcibly buttoned, first a large broad-cloth cape about his neck, and then his ample extra mackintosh, which swept the floor. "You must hold it up," said he, "till you have taken your seat, and then it will keep your feet warm. I wonder what people would do," continued he, as he wrapped his own neck and chin in a large cotton shawl, "if

I didn't find capes and cloaks for them when I travel!"

Felix felt half afraid his friend had defrauded himself of some of his needful habiliments, but he soon saw that there was no need for anxiety; for, in addition to the great-coat of the day, he produced a huge, rough, double-breasted coat, into which, by the help of a waiter, he thrust his large person, and then, putting a close-fitting silk night-cap on his head, he forced on his hat, and declared himself ready for his journey.

"We shall keep one another warm," said the young woman, laughing; and, all three being in very good humour, and very comfortable, after their warm tea, they mounted to their back seat, and, by dint of a little extra squeezing, felt themselves in as good travelling trim as they had been in the whole course of the day.

It was not till they got to the next stage, and Felix saw the new coachman, who had dismounted, and was now again drawing on his huge gloves, that he remembered that they had parted with the "varra graidly body;" and he wondered, with a very appalling dread, whether the new coachman knew anything about him. "Not he, indeed, I dare say," returned his stout companion; "but don't

trouble yourself—I shall stay a day in London, and the Belle Sauvage will do very well for me; and I'll take care of you till your friends come."

"Thank you, sir," returned Felix; "but I daresay they'll meet me."

"In that case," said the other, "you'll do very well without the coachman."

It was a cold, raw night, and, but for the stranger's munificence, Felix would have suffered miserably; and, towards morning, it began to rain. The young woman, however, had a good, large umbrella, under which Felix was screened, and the stranger produced, from the capacious pocket of his upper coat, a mackintosh hood, which he put on, looking, for all the world, like an Esquimaux under a seal-skin. Thus, spite of the rain, they travelled on comfortably enough, excepting for that listless weariness which a night journey produces on the unaccustomed traveller, and which, in Felix's case, was united to anxiety about his new home, and the forlorn consciousness, that when he had said good-bye to this kind chance-companion, he should be once more in a world of strangers; and, the nearer he approached London, the more oppressive seemed the melancholy that was weighing down his heart.

It was half-past five o'clock when they drew up at the Angel, Islington; but, in the pouring rain, and the dreary atmosphere, how little did that early-morning first specimen of London, answer any of his preconceptions! That "London streets were paved with *gold*," had been sung to him in his earlier years; *mud* would have been far more correct, thought he, as he saw it splash right and left, as they drove the whole length of Goswell-street, and those which succeeded it, before they reached the Belle Sauvage. It was then half-past six, and nearly light; yet, everything looked dingy, and comfortless, and dripping with wet; and the waiters, who came to offer their attentions to the passengers, seemed themselves afraid of turning out of doors.

The stout gentleman from Felix's right hand had got down, and the young woman sat under her umbrella, busied by putting sundry things into her black silk bag, when a kind voice at the coach side inquired, "Is there anybody here belonging to me?"

"Yes," said poor Felix, jumping instantly to the conclusion that it was Mr. Le Smith.

"Down with you, then, in a jiffy," replied the very pleasant-countenanced young man to whom the voice belonged, "for I've had a hackney coach waiting an hour."

Felix began to dismount, overjoyed to think that Mr. Le Smith was such a one.

"Heigh ho!" said the young man, helping Felix down, nevertheless, "is there nobody else?"

"I'm coming, James!" said the young woman, who had now arranged all to her satisfaction, and put down her umbrella; and, the next moment, the two friends, or relations, met with the most cordial affection. This, then, was not Mr. Le Smith! and poor Felix felt not only grievously disappointed, but ashamed, for he thought he had made a very awkward blunder.

"There's no Mr. Le Smith here at present," said the stout gentleman, returning to the back of the coach; "but I've got a nice snug parlour, with a warm fire in it, and ordered breakfast; we'll go in and enjoy ourselves!" Felix felt both disappointed and relieved; disappointed that his friends were not as punctual as other people's, and relieved, because he somehow feared to find Mr. Le Smith different to the young man with the pleasant voice. His basket and his oaken box being now taken from the coach, together with the other's luggage, and ordered into the little parlour where they were to breakfast, they followed it, not, however, till,



after having been shown into separate chambers, by the stout gentleman's orders, they washed well with warm water, from which Felix, and no doubt his friend, experienced the most comfortable results.

After breakfast, no Mr. Le Smith still making his appearance, the stout gentleman told Felix that he himself was an old stager, and that a night-journey was nothing to him, but that he must lie down in the great chair by the fire and sleep; that he would, in the meantime, read the morning papers and write letters, for he did not care to go out till afternoon, when he was going to the packet-office, being on his way to Hamburgh. Felix needed not to be told twice to sleep, for he had been nodding for the last half hour, and had kept his eyes open only from respect to his friend.

It was twelve o'clock, when the room door was thrown open by a waiter, and Mr. Le Smith announced. Felix was woke by the sound of his entrance, and beheld a stout red-faced man, in rather rusty black, the expression of whose countenance was selfish and cunning, and made still more displeasing by a great quantity of ill-kept black hair. Felix's fellow-traveller, who was a person of no consequence, in Mr. Le Smith's eyes,

was therefore very uncereemoniously greeted, while he welcomed Felix, without any apology for his tardiness, with a poor joke, about doing at Rome as the Romans do, and thus commencing his London life by turning day into night; then ringing the bell, and ordering in a glass of spirits and water, with a slight movement to the old traveller, said he would drink it, and look at the paper, while Felix got ready. Felix put on his great-coat and comforter, and stood with his hat in his hand; but, had he known what his sagacious coach-companion's thoughts were, he would have felt greater disinclination to accompany him than he did. Felix took out his remaining change, to pay for his breakfast, but his friend refused, adding, that he was heartily welcome; and that, if ever he were staying in London, he would call upon him—looking significantly at Mr. Le Smith, as for an address. Le Smith understood him very well, but he only made a cold bow, and bade Felix follow him.

“Good-bye, and thank you, sir,” said Felix, really sorry to part from him. “Good-bye, my dear fellow!” said the other; adding, as the door closed after them, “If yon’s an honest man, my name’s not John Page!”

“Eighteen pence for your glass, if you

please, sir," said a waiter to Le Smith, as he advanced towards the door. "Ha! yes," replied he, "but I must speak with this young gentleman in a private room."

"You can walk in here, sir," said the waiter, opening a door.

"Well," said Le Smith, the moment the door was closed, "I hope you have brought some money with you."

"Yes," replied Felix, "but it's stitched into the lining of my waistcoat."

"Twenty pounds?" said the other.

"Yes," was Felix's reply.

"It will never do for you to carry so much about with you in London," said Le Smith; "you'll get robbed! Off with your coat, and I'll keep the money safe for you!"

Mr. Le Smith was not half as long in getting the two £10 notes out of the waistcoat-lining, as Alice had been sewing them in; and, with evident satisfaction, he thrust them down deep into his trousers-pocket.

"Upon my word," said he, as if at that moment just become aware of an unpleasant fact, "I'm come without my purse! Have you any loose change about you?"

Felix felt afraid of him, and he submissively answered, that he had only one half-

"Oh, that will do!" said Le Smith; "I'll give it you again, when we get home; Mrs. Le Smith always has change!"

The glass of spirits and water was paid for, the basket and the box given into the hands of a dirty little boy, who proffered himself as porter, the moment they entered the street; and, in five minutes, Felix Law had arrived at his new home.

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE NEW HOME AND ITS INMATES.

It was to one of the meanest houses in Harp Alley, Farringdon-street, that Mr. Le Smith led Felix. He knocked twice at the door, and very furiously the second time, before it was opened, and then he was very angry that they had been kept waiting so long. The woman who opened the door was Mrs. Le Smith herself; and into her hands he consigned Felix, saying he must needs be tired after so long a journey, and had better go to bed; adding, that he had gentlemen waiting for him, and must therefore now go away, nor should be back before evening. It was well for Felix that he had no very exalted ideas of what the Le Smiths would be; and yet, had his ex-

pectations been the most extravagant in the world, his dismay could hardly have been greater than it was, when he saw his new home and its inmates. Of Mr. Le Smith we have spoken—let us now introduce his wife. She was young, certainly, but with marks of premature age in her countenance; at one time she might have been pretty, but her eyes and cheeks were hollow and faded, and there were wrinkles and furrows on her brow, and about her mouth, which told of sorrow, anxiety, and an uneasy temper. Such a countenance Felix had never seen; so young, and yet so haggard; wearing smiles, yet so wanting of peace! Her dress was shabby, yet tawdry; she was evidently dressed-up for the day, and intended to honour her guest. She wore many long, ill-curled ringlets, and had on a dirty cap, of red and black gauze, in the front of which was a large brooch of Bristol stones, showily set. Her gown was of green silk, but much worn and greased, yet fashionably made, and flounced and trimmed with cheap lace. The room into which he was taken was quite accordant with its mistress; and, as Felix declined to eat anything, he was left in it alone, while she went to prepare his bed. Such a room as that he had never before seen, for there were none such in the dales. There was a cracked

glass in an old gilt frame, over the mantel-piece, and the walls were stencilled in a showy, but very coarse pattern. There were two sofas in the room, with different cotton covers—dirty, faded, torn, and ill put on; a work-table, with a dingy green silk bag; and a tea-caddy, the lid of which was broken, and a flute, tied round with strong thread, lying upon it; half a dozen old hair-bottomed chairs; a Pembroke table in the middle, covered with a dirty cloth; and on the floor, a large-patterned, but much worn, Brussels carpet, with a rug that did not match. Everything looked dirty, tawdry, and ill kept, and produced the most dispiriting effect upon the mind.

Presently Mrs. Le Smith told him his room was ready, bidding him bring up his box; which he did readily, remarking that he needed clean linen.

"Oh Lord! you must be careful about washing," said she; "I daresay it's cheap in Yorkshire, but in London it's a horrid price!"

If the room down stairs had surprised Felix, how much more must the chamber into which he was taken, accustomed, as he was, to the amply furnished and clean chambers of his dale friends; for in it was no furniture whatever, excepting a small French bed, without drapery, and a chair with a

broken back, upon which stood an ill-matched basin and ewer.

"I hope you'll have a comfortable sleep," said Mrs. Le Smith, opening the bed for him, upon which, however, there were clean sheets; "and when would you like me to wake you?" asked she, standing with the door in her hand. Felix replied, that he did not know; and, after waiting a few moments, seeing he had not decided, she repeated that she hoped he would sleep comfortably, and left him.

Felix sat down upon his box, and began to cry. He felt how abject the place and the people were; that he was abandoned of all his friends, and utterly forlorn; and nothing but a paroxysm of tears seemed able to relieve his heart. And yet, what good could tears do? So he thought, and, with an impatience that almost urged him to rush from the house, and claim the kindness of any stranger, he walked hastily about the room. He looked through the window. What a cheerless and disheartening prospect! He thought of Alice, and Linn's Gill, and again he hurst into tears. After a while, he threw himself upon the bed, and sleep must have stolen upon him, for when he raised himself, in the belief that he had lain there but a short time, it was getting dusk, and he felt that

uneasy sensation of body—say nothing of depression of mind—which sleep at an unusual hour produces.

The dismal chamber looked even more dismal in the dusk; and hoping, at all events, to find fire below, for he was also miserably chilled, he went again down stairs. Mrs. Le Smith was there, and with her the child, of whom the father had spoken in his letter. The first thing that cheered his heart in this doleful abode was the sight of a child; but even that partook of the character of the place. Felix almost started back when he took a closer survey of the poor little creature. Like many another, born and bred in the unwholesome nooks of London, it had a meagre, withered, and almost skeleton-like aspect. It was two years old, but it had only very imperfectly the use of its limbs, which were most painfully attenuated. The pitiable aspect of the child was, however, made more striking by its miserable adornments. Its thin hair was tortured into angular curls, and its sleeves, revealing its slender bony arms, were looped up with dirty ribbon. Felix thought of "lile Katie," and her two robust, strong-limbed little brothers; and yet he tried to make acquaintance with this, whom her mother called "Miss Julia."



Such was Felix Law's new home, and such were its inmates; and nothing could be more melancholy.

Mr. LeSmith had been bred to the law; but, having been guilty of malpractices in his profession, had been prohibited pursuing it. Yet nevertheless, he did occasionally find clients, and, by one means or another, contrived to gain a miserable subsistence. Nothing could have been more fortunate for him than thus gaining possession of Felix. His only regret was, that with him he received but forty pounds. However, he hoped, by one means or another, to get Linn's Gill sold, and the purchase-money into his own hands. During the time he contrived to keep out of prison, he might generally be found at a certain public-house in Holborn, where he saw his clients and took his dinner, returning home in the evening, when, if his temper was good, which was the same thing as saying he had money in his pocket, he would take his wife to one of the minor theatres; if bad, as was most frequently the case, a scene of domestic bickering and warfare commenced. Again we say, could any thing be more melancholy than to be a member of such a household!

was not long before the confinement of

the situation, the altered food, and general way of life, and, above all, the want of regular employment, to say nothing of the want of affection and sympathy, began to produce their effects upon Felix. It is true, he persuaded Mrs. Le Smith to go out with him, promising to carry Julia all the way, and, by degrees, came even to venture out himself; and thus, before he had been many weeks a resident in Harp Alley, he knew the whole length of streets from the commencement of Holborn to the Mansion House; Farringdon Street, and all the way down to Blackfriar's Bridge; and the whole length of the Strand and Fleet Street; he had gone round, and even into St. Paul's; watched the boys play at Christ Church Hospital, and wished he was one of them; and had even ventured, more than once, short as the days were, to the Post Office, to see the mail coaches start. He knew where the baker lived, that brought the daily loaf; and from what public-house the daily pot of porter came: he knew where the butcher lived, and the grocer, and went very often into Farringdon Market, to buy vegetables. There was some degree of pleasure in all this; he was amazed with all he saw, and his eager curiosity, and the delight he expressed, made

Mrs. Le Smith persuade her husband, one night, to take them to the play, and to go down to Greenwich with them one Sunday. But spite of these little glimpses of pleasure, Felix resolved with himself to write to Gibb's Ha' and relate all, believing that he had only to do so in order to ensure his recall, even from Christie himself; but one difficulty always stood in his way—he had neither pen, ink, nor paper; and at last he determined to ask money from Mrs. Le Smith, wherewith to purchase them.

“Oh Lord!” exclaimed she, when he made his request, “I've no money!” Felix mentioned what Mr. Le Smith had said about her always having change, when he borrowed his half-crown.

“But you've more money than that half-crown!” said Mrs. Le Smith. Felix related how her husband had taken it from the lining of his waistcoat.

“Good gracious!” exclaimed she, “then there's an end of your money for ever! What a wretch that man is!” continued she; “why, if he'd all the Bank of England, he'd spend it! He'd five hundred pounds with me; and, bless you! it was all gone in four months, and I hadn't a sixpence of it! My father was Mrs. Rudy's brother; and, if it had'nt

been for her, we should have starved. Get down, Miss!" said she, in the irritation of growing passion, pushing the feeble child from her knee, "what an everlasting plague you are!"

Felix took the meagre little creature, who began to cry, on his knee, and Mrs. Le Smith continued—"Lord bless me! and so you were such a fool as to give him all that money! Now remember, sir, that you give the next to me!"

"Oh!" said Felix, speaking the wish that was uppermost in his mind, "I think I sha'n't stay here long! I want to go back to Dent-dale!" And hereupon his full heart came to his eyes, and he wept, for the first time, in the presence of Mrs. Le Smith.

The next day Mr. Le Smith, in a manner unusually kind, told Felix, that if he wished to write to his dale friends, he now might do it, as he himself was about sending to them, and could enclose a letter; and that pen, ink, and paper were accordingly at his service. Poor Felix felt wonderfully grateful; and the next day wrote, carefully sealed, and directed the following letter, to Alice o' Christie's o' Gibb's Ha,' Dent-dale:—

" DEAREST FRIEND,

" I am sure I might call you mother, for so I feel you to be! How very unhappy I have been since I left you! I am sure if I were to live in London a hundred years, I should never like it. Willy Parrington would tell you all about our journey to Manchester. I got to London by the coach very well, and met with a very kind gentleman; he paid for my dinner and breakfast. Oh how I wish he had been Mr. Le S.—you know who I mean. I am very sorry to send you a dismal letter, because I know Christie wishes me to live in London, and you wish me to be happy; but I must speak my mind to you, for there is nobody else in the world that I can speak plainly and truly to.

" We live in a very dirty, close lane, and the air is so thick, that the sun hardly ever shines; we have no garden nor yard, and if one wants a breath of fresh air, one must go into the streets, and they are so dirty you can't think. One thing always makes me very sorrowful—there are so many jails all about us;—there's the great Fleet Prison, and Newgate, and the Old Bailey, and Bridewell; and there have been some men hanged since I came. Sometimes, when I go into better streets, and see people handsomely

dressed, with their pretty children, I think, if there was but anybody here to love me, I could be very happy; but then, I think of you, and Katie, and Ralph, and I wish I had but wings to fly to you, and never see London again! I try to love Mrs. Le Smith and Julia, but someway trying to love never makes me happy; I suppose if I lived long enough with them I should love them; but, my very dear friend, this is what I want to know, whether I may not come back to Dent-dale. I am sure if Christie were to hear Mr. Le S. swear, or were to see him, he would not wish me to live here. I cannot think him my own mother's cousin, and yet I think he means to be kind to me; for, as soon as he knew I wanted to write to you, he let me; but I would rather be scolded by Christie and Naunty than live here. Tell Christie that I will look after the sheep better than ever I did, if you will only let me come back. You will think this letter very blotty, but it is with my tears. I cannot help crying when I think of you.

"I think if I had my knitting I should be much more happy. Mrs. Le Smith does not know how to knit, and she laughs at me about it; but I know the baker's wife, who is a very nice woman, and I mean to ask her

to buy me some yarn and needles, for I think I could get some money by knitting. Mr. Le S. had all my money; he took it out of my waistcoat as soon as I came. I never saw money so much wanted as it is here; but everything is bought in London, even sticks to light the fire; and I don't believe he has a bag full of sovereigns in his desk, like Christie. I hope I am not ungrateful, for sometimes I think they mean to be kind to me; but I am sure if my father had known them, he never would have wished Christie to send me here. We never go to church; and Mr. Le S. drinks a great deal; but perhaps it is the way in London, for they call me very inexperienced. They thought my way of talking very queer; and Mrs. Le S. could not bear to hear me speak, at first.

"I say my prayers every night and morning, and I never forget you all, my dear friends in Dent-dale. I hope you will let me hear some time from you, and say that I may come back. I often feel passionate and angry here; I am afraid of growing wicked; and it often makes me very miserable. I should laugh if I got back to Gibb's Ha', but in this dismal place I never shall laugh again. I have written you a very long letter, and I shall wait with great impatience for your

answer. You must direct to me at No. —, Harp Alley, Farringdon Street.

“ Give my dearest love to them all, and to Christie if he please.

“ And so, my dear, dear friend, I am your affectionate  
“ FELIX LAW.”

When Felix handed the above letter, duly sealed and directed, to Mr. Le Smith, he humbly inquired when it would go, and when he might expect an answer. “ I shall send to-day,” replied Le Smith, “ but your dale friends are slow correspondents; if you get an answer this day six months you may be satisfied.” Felix sighed, for he well knew what a difficult task letter-writing was at Gibb’s Ha’.

Now, my readers, I doubt not, will readily imagine what it never came into the mind of Felix, little as he liked the Le Smiths, to conceive, that this letter was first of all to be inspected by Mr. Le Smith—in fact was designed by this artful man to obtain a knowledge of the boy’s sentiments towards him. The contents of the letter, although they did not greatly surprise him, failed not to make him excessively angry; and in the spirit of this anger, he had a malicious pleasure in the treachery of his conduct. Felix’s letter



was burnt; and, a few days after, Christie o' Gibbs Ha' read the following to his wife:—

“DEAR SIR,

“London, March 25, 183—

“I shall thank you to make me, at your earliest convenience, the remittance now due, viz. one quarter's payment, of ten pounds. Your friend Felix is extremely well, and perfectly happy. Mrs. Le Smith and he like each other greatly; in fact, you must not be jealous if we steal his affections from you. He already talks of selling Linn's Gill.

“With compliments to Mrs. Swithenbank, I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,

“THEODORE LE SMITH.”

“*To Christopher Swithenbank, Esq.*”

“Ye need na fear th' bairn's breaking his heart to come back, ye see,” said Christie, after he had finished this letter.

“Aweel!” replied Alice, sighing, “I have na forgotten him sae soon as he's forgotten me!”

“Ye'd na reeght to expect ought better from him,” said Naunty; “a lazy, good-for-nought, unthankful bairn as he was!”

“Nay, nay!” said Alice, “that he niver was! but mappen those fine Lunnon folk corrupt him!—and he's sent na love to

us!" exclaimed she, the next moment, half angrily.

"And talks o' selling Linn's Gill!" exclaimed Christie; "th' young fool! such a bit o' good land as that!"

"Aweel," replied Alice, "that comes o' sending him sae far away. If he takes ony wrang ways, I sall always lay it at ye'r door, Naunty!"

Such a speech as this had never come from Alice's lips before; but she was bitter with disappointment. A combat of angry opinions raged at Gibb's Ha' in consequence; and, had Le Smith seen the effect of his letter, even he would have been satisfied.

---

## CHAPTER XVII.

### MUCH IN LITTLE SPACE.

FELIX hoped that, in a fortnight, he might expect an answer, and accordingly he determined, during that time, to possess his mind in patience; and, in order still further to enable him to do so, he resolved to apply, as he had often thought of doing, to Mrs. Rundy, for the means of purchasing knitting materials. He knew she was a very kind-hearted woman, because she supplied them with <sup>1</sup>

daily quartern loaf, on the easy terms of no payment; and she had, moreover, greatly admired his knit stockings, and expressed her desire to get such. He went up stairs, therefore, to put on his better hat and jacket, in order that, as a petitioner, he might look his best in good Mrs. Rudy's eyes, when he made a most appalling discovery—his best suit of clothes and his hat were gone! He turned over the little bed, and even lifted up the broken chair, to see if they were hidden anywhere—but no!—they were clean gone; and, full of amazement and dismay, he ran down to Mrs. Le Smith with the astounding intelligence. There was something in her manner which he could not comprehend, at the first mention of his loss; and an indistinct suspicion crossed his mind, that she knew something about it. But when, afterwards, she solemnly protested her astonishment and disbelief of the fact, and went up stairs with him, and enacted a search, which seemed zealous and sincere, he was quite imposed upon.

"It's that vile Irishwoman," said she, "who staid in the house while we went to the play, that has stolen them; but she shall never again come near the place!"

Felix said he would find out where she lived, and go to her; but this Mrs. Le Smith

objected to, saying she would get them back for him, or, failing to do so, would persuade her husband to buy him a new suit.

But very little consolation came with this promise, for he had learnt, long before, that Mrs. Le Smith had small influence with her husband; and, cheated and impoverished as he felt himself to be, instead of going to good Mrs. Rundy's, he sat down in his chamber and cried; and, in the depths of his heart, felt such disgust against Irish women, and the Le Smiths, as became almost hatred and malice.

"Oh, I am very wicked!" groaned out the poor boy, at length; "I never felt in this way at Gibb's Ha', except once, and that was when Christie beat me!" And then the sweet thought of little Katie, following him to the solitary barn, and clasping him round the neck, came to his mind, and he felt even yet more wretched.

Just about the time that the fortnight had expired, an important event occurred at No. —. The landlord seized upon their goods for rent, and Mr. Le Smith, spite of Christie's remittance, which had duly come, was thrown into the Fleet prison for debt. It was no very unusual thing, as we have said, for him to be an inhabitant of this place; and there-

fore his wife was not as much distressed as Felix thought she ought to be. But a removal was absolutely necessary; and Mrs. Rudy, as on former occasions, after many angry reproaches, and vows that she would not advance a single penny for her niece, promised to pay for a couple of meanly furnished upper rooms in Shoe Lane.

Lest, by the removal from Harp Alley, he might lose his hoped-for letter, Felix made the letter-carrier acquainted with his present residence—but no letter ever came; and Mr. Le Smith, who feared that, now he was removed from the control of Felix, he might be writing to his friends, told him, one day, when he went to the prison with a message from his wife, that he had had a letter from his Dent-dale friends, and that they were all well, but that Christie did not wish Felix to write; in fact, he desired he should not do so, because it cost so much in postage. Felix's heart died within him, at what seemed this new proof of Christie's unkindness, and he felt cut off from his friends for ever.

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed he, with his eyes full of tears, "but did Alice send no message?"

"There was no other message than what I have given you," replied Le Smith, regardless of the anguish he inflicted

"But will you please sir, nevertheless, to give my very dear love to them," said Felix, "when you write?"

"Yes, yes," replied Le Smith. Thus were all Felix's hopes of intelligence from his friends cruelly blasted.

A year and a half went on, and the course of the Le Smiths was downward—a downward course of degradation and ruin. Le Smith still continued in prison, the remittances, which Christie duly made, being received for him by some accomplice, kept from the knowledge of his creditors, and appropriated to his own indulgence, and the scanty maintenance of his wife and child.

There had been, long, no attempt to conceal from Felix the fact, that poverty was heavy upon them; and the very want of necessities at length sent him to Mrs. Rundy with his former petition. The good woman had long distinguished Felix by her favour; and, although she professed scepticism as to a boy's ability to knit, she yet furnished him with the needful requisites. In about a week, he presented her with a very well shaped, and regularly knit pair of yarn stockings, with which not even Peggy Hibbledon could have found fault. Mrs. Rundy was delighted; and, from this time forth, knitting

was his hourly occupation. Mrs. Le Smith, seeing thus that a new bread-winner had sprung up, began to make herself very easy about the future, and to spend, more freely, the occasional sovereigns which she received from her husband.

But while Felix was working hard, to maintain these worthless people, a most painful and terrible fact came to his knowledge. He was one night roused by a cry of fire, from the sitting-room in which Mrs. Le Smith and the child slept, and, rushing in, he saw the hangings on fire, and Mrs. Le Smith looking strangely vacant, unable to stand, and her dress woefully disordered. He had not lived nearly two years in London, without becoming familiar with that most melancholy and degrading spectacle, a woman intoxicated with gin.

"Oh Heavens! she's drunk!" exclaimed he, in a tone of utter disgust, to the woman of the house, and some of the other lodgers, who had succeeded in extinguishing the flames.

"Lord!" said she, "to be sure! She's drunk every night!" And then, as if it was a mere matter of course, helped her on the bed, and laid beside her the terrified and miserable little child, which, midnight as it was, was still wearing its day-clothes.

Felix understood now, many things which had hitherto been mysterious. The mother and child were both victims to that curse of the lower class—gin, and he determined, if possible, to reclaim them; but, in Mrs. Le Smith's case, the attempt was vain. This melancholy labour of Christian love was, however, productive of some small glimmerings of happiness to him, in throwing the child upon his care and love. Not a day passed but he carried her out, turning her attention to every passing object of interest; and, with his knitting in his hands, within doors, ransacked the stores of his memory, and set his invention to work, to contribute to her amusement. The unhappy mother, finding Felix willing to take charge of the child, was selfishly rejoiced, more especially as with him she was contented and happy.

Time went on; and poor Mrs. Le Smith, now become shameless in the indulgence of her appetite for the poison which was killing her, might be seen, with inflamed eyes and hollow cheeks, the picture of squalor and drunkenness, reeling from the gin-palace, at the bottom of Holborn Hill, to her miserable home in Shoe Lane, an object of pity and shame to many a passenger, and of disgust and derision to others.

It was now mid-winter, and drearily cold.



None but the poor, ill-clothed, and ill-fed, as were Felix and his meagre little companion, ever knew the real discomforts of that season. Wealthy ladies were sitting in their well-appointed morning rooms, clothed in their rich silks and woollen garments, with their feet, warmly shod, upon soft rugs, before blazing fires, employed upon their never-ceasing worsted work—reading their amusing books, or devising expensive dresses for the evening's dance, when Felix Law, in his thin, thread-bare, and out-at-the-elbow suit, and with a pair of old shoes, considerably too large for him, secured to his feet as best might be, walked out, to get, cold as it was, a mouthful of fresh air, with his helpless little charge in his arms, about whose neck might be seen, carefully wrapped, that very red woollen comforter which Alice had provided him with, two winters before. The child, which was four years old, was not heavier than a stout infant of six months; but there was something inconceivably affecting in the sallow, bony hands, and the quiet melancholy countenance, with its large sunken eyes, full of anxiety and unnatural experience. There is no human countenance indicative of suffering, so pitiable as such a one.

Mrs. Le Smith was on her bed, a fearful

object of life wasting before the most insatiable of appetites. She was become now incapable of looking after her contracted household duties. "She was on the very brink of the pit," as Mrs. Rundy remarked to one of her neighbours. The doctor averred that not even abstinence from the fatal liquor could now save her; "and so," said Mrs. Rundy, "I'll e'en let her have a drop or two now and then through the day, just to bring on sleep, and make her comfortable." She had just had that "drop or two," when Felix and the child went out, willing to change the stifling and mephitic atmosphere of that doleful chamber, for the keen wind, which blew down Chancery Lane.

It was on a Friday morning—let no one henceforth say that Friday is unlucky—and the forlorn children, after they had gone once up and once down, were seated, Julia on his knee, with one ghastly arm round his neck, on the third step of a certain barrister's door. Felix knew that, in a few minutes, a policeman would come and bid him not be sitting on any gentleman's steps; but still he sat there, for his mind was cast back to the dales of Yorkshire, where he could fancy he saw the frozen beck, with boys "laking" upon it; the brown fell-side, and the sheep driven

down to the lower pastures for food. It did not look winterly there, nevertheless; it was like a garden of Eden! People passed up and down the pavement; lawyers and lawyers' clerks; counsellors in their wigs and gowns; serjeants-at-law; ladies; children and servants. All this Felix saw, but he observed nothing; when, all at once, spite of his day-dream, his attention was arrested by the countenance of a tall and stout lady, wrapped in velvets and fur, who, with another, much shorter, was walking quickly up the pavement. At once he forgot the frozen beck and the brown fells, in fixed attention to that countenance, or rather those eyes, so large, so mild, so affectionate. They were fixed upon him and the child, and his heart glowed with unbounded reverence and affection;—yet the lady walked on with her companion.

“Did you see those children, Miss Horton?” said she, after a minute or two, to her companion.

“No!—where?” was the reply.

“I had nothing but gold,” said the lady, “or I must have given them something; and yet they did not beg!”

“Oh, you are children-mad, you know,” said her companion, laughing.

"I shall never forget those countenances," continued the other. "Such, telling of patient suffering, I never saw!"

Felix looked after them as long as they were in sight; and then a police-man told him to move off; and, settling the child in his arms, he moved down the pavement in his miserable shoes. He was about fifty yards from the Fleet Street end of Chancery Lane, when the lady, who had now parted from her companion, came behind him.

"Is the child ill, my boy?" asked she, looking into his face, with such an expression as an angel of mercy, or his own mother, might have worn. Felix's eyes swam with tears, yet he replied readily, that she was no worse than common.

"I should like to know something about you," said the lady. "Perhaps you think me very impertinent," added she, smiling, seeing that he hesitated to reply.

But he replied earnestly, that he could not think her impertinent.

"Well, where is your home?" asked she. Felix again hesitated, for he knew not whether to say Dent-dale or Shoe Lane.

Without interpreting this seeming reluctance to answer to his disadvantage, she remarked that, standing thus on the pavement, they were sadly in everybody's way; but

that, if he would follow her to Mr. Serjeant Moiles's chambers, they would find a better place to talk in.

In a quarter of an hour Mrs. Waldegrave, for such was her name, and Felix, with Julia seated upon a stool beside him, were sitting in a carpeted room before a good fire. He told all his history, and good Mrs. Waldegrave was greatly affected by it.

"I will go with you and see this unhappy Mrs. Le Smith," said she; and accordingly into that miserable chamber in Shoe Lane she went, greatly to the amazement of the mistress of the house, who, seeing one in silk and velvet making her way up the narrow, dingy staircase, for the first time in her life felt that her house was dirty.

We who know so well how true would be every word of Felix's history, need not tell all the pains which good Mrs. Waldegrave took to ascertain that it was so, nor how Mr. Serjeant Moile actually went himself to Le Smith, in the Fleet Prison, and clearly discovered the fraud which had been practised towards the poor boy.

By Mrs. Waldegrave's intervention, Mrs. Rundy was prevailed upon to admit her unhappy niece into her own house, not to live—but to die; and here also Felix and Julia found a comparatively comfortable home.

Mrs. Rundy being inexhaustible on the subject of Felix's praise, Mrs. Waldegrave was quite willing to believe all that was said; and, three mornings after that happy Friday, he found himself in a new suit of clothes, sitting in Mrs. Waldegrave's beautiful back drawing-room in Eaton Square, inditing the following letter to Alice, which was to accompany one addressed to Christie by Mrs. Waldegrave, detailing all the facts which had come to her knowledge, and of which Christie himself might be considered mainly the cause.

" MY DEAREST FRIEND,

" I don't know how to write or what to say, because I am so very happy. I thought you were angry with me, and had quite forgotten me; and, after all, perhaps it has only been the wickedness of Mr. Le Smith which has made me think so. I was very unhappy, but now I seem happier than ever; I only want to know that you love me still. Mr. Le Smith said that Christie was angry at my writing to you; neither Mrs. Waldegrave nor Mr. Serjeant Moile, who is a great lawyer, believe that you ever had my letter, for he is a very bad man, and is in the Fleet Prison for debt. Mrs. Le Smith is very ill;

the doctors expect her to die every day. I am grown very fond of poor little Julia, but I do not love Katie less than I did. Mrs. Waldegrave wishes Christie to come to London. I shall be very glad to go back again with him, if he will let me.

“Mrs. Waldegrave says I am not to write any more; so I send my dear love to you all, and am, my dearest friend, your very affectionate

“FELIX LAW.”

*Jan. 15, 183—*

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A STRANGER IN LONDON.

POOR Mrs. Le Smith died, and her last words were a blessing on Felix Law.

The very day after the funeral, Mrs. Moor, Mrs. Waldegrave's maid, came in the carriage to Mrs. Rudy's door, desiring that Felix might hastily dress himself very neatly, and come with her, for that her mistress wanted him immediately. Mrs. Moor wore a very mysterious air, and would give Felix no idea as to the important business upon which his presence was required.

“Oh, I know!” exclaimed Felix, raptu-

rously, at length, "Christie's come! I am sure he is!"

"No, indeed he is not!" replied Mrs. Moor, in such a positive manner as at once sunk his hopes, and left him in uneasy conjecture the rest of the way.

"Now you must look your very best!" said Mrs. Waldegrave, meeting him at the library door; "I will not have you discrediting us by dismal looks; and I must have the pleasure of introducing you!" And so, opening the door, what was his utter amazement and inexpressible joy to see Mikky Hawes!

Joyous as the old man's nature was, the moment he saw Felix, he put his blue cotton pocket handkerchief to his eyes; while Felix, clasping him round the neck, kissed his withered, yet rosy cheek, over and over again.

"Aweel, bairn," said Mikky, holding him at arm's length, "ye's considerably grown in height—but ye look badly, and na wonder! But the Lord be praised that a' this iniquity's fand out. Th' missis here, and I, have had a deal a talk about ye."

"Yes," said Mrs. Waldegrave, who had been greatly pleased with the simple-hearted old man, "your friend arrived last night,



and we have had a deal of talk; and now it is but fair that I leave you to the same indulgence. There will be a dinner for you and your friend, Felix, at one, and then I will see you again, and we can perhaps find some amusement for you both in the evening.

"Now, that's what I reckon a real gentlewoman!" exclaimed Mikky Hawes, the moment she was gone out.

"Oh there never was one like her!" exclaimed Felix, enthusiastically—"there never was! and I wish she was the queen! But how are they at Gibb's Ha'?" asked he, in the next breath, wishing he could put into one answer all he wished to know.

"They are but doing badly," replied Mikky. "Alice, poor body, has had a sort o' low fever hanging about her many months; and Christie looks quite th' oud man! They hae had nought but ill luck, o' late years! Th' oud woman—ye have na forgotten Peggy?" said Mikky.

"No indeed!" returned Felix.

"Aweel, th' oud woman played 'em a bad card at last. She set off, without sae much as a day's warning, and went to Richard's, as if on a veesit. Next day came a man wi' a horse and cart, and wanted a' her things; that varra day month, she died! and,

would ye believe it, when they came to open th' will, iver y penny, and th' house i' Gars-throp—a' was left to Richard and his bairns. Christie went to th' berrin—and a varra gert berrin it was!—and when th' will was opened and read afore everybody, Christie flew into a fearful passion, and would na believe it was th' true will; and when he saw th' date, which was three years afore, and them present as had witnessed it, he was amais't beside himsel. She'd left a power o' money; some thousands i' th' Kendal bank, beside what she had up and down on bond. And there were those present, and mysel amang 'em, as made free to tell Christie a bit o' our minds—how he could na expect a blessing when he'd gone clean against a dying man's will, and turned his fatherless and motherless bairn out o' doors!"

"But," interrupted Felix, filled with compassion for Christie, in his disappointment, "neither Mrs. Waldegrave nor Mr. Serjeant Moile believe that "Christie forbade my writing to him."

"Nay, nay," continued Mikky, "that was mair than Christie iver did! Ye see, after th' oud woman's death, naething seemed to prosper wi' him. The sheep got th' rot, and a power o' em died; and he left his hay

standing, after iverybody's else's was got, just as if he was clean daft, and sae he niver could get it, for it was a wet latter-end: and his corn was th' warst i' a' th' dale;—and that was th' first year! and th' last has na been better. Iverybody said it was a curse come upon him for breaking his word wi' a dying man—that was ye'r ain father. Nay, ye need na greet! we's hope things will come round again, noo! Weel, ye see, when Christie's misfortunes came, a' like Job's, fra th' four winds o' heaven all at ance, I thought he was in hands mightier to punish than man's, and that it did na beseem me, as was but a poor sinful cretur like himsel, to be keeping up oud quarrels; sae when I heard as th' oud mare was dead—”

“Is she dead? poor creature!” interrupted Felix.

“Ay, and th' white cow beside!—weel, when I heard this, says I to my oud woman, ‘I’s just gae across to Gibb’s Ha,’ for I begin to be varra sorry for ‘em.’ Sae I went up, and I put my pricks i’ my pocket, thinking, if they would be neeghbourly, why I’d e’en sit down a bit; and, would ye believe it? it was eleven o’clock afore I left th’ door, and it was daylight when I went; and that was last March! We’d a deal o’ talk aboot ye;

sometimes we thought ye'd taken to Lunnon ways, and were really corrupted, and didna care about ye'r oud friends, and wanted to sell Linn's Gill. Nay, ye need na start—that was what this Maister Le Smith said—what he was always writing aboot. Ye were at school, he said, and were to be a gert doctor o' law, and a deal o' money was wanted for ye'r edication; and that ye'd niver come back to Dent-dale, for ye liked Lunnon sae much better. Varra decent sort o' letters he wrote, as would ha deceived ony body. Christie, poor man, readily took it a' in, and said mony hard things about ye, as he's repented of since; but Alice, she niver would believe at ye could like Lunnon best; and a sair heart she had; she was sometimes for writing to ye hersel, but she's na scholar, poor woman, and sae she niver did; and then, again, she was for setting off hersel to hear ye say it wi' her ain ears, afore she'd believe it;—and I think i' my heart she would hae done sae, but for this slow fever as has kept her badly sae lang. But we's be a' weel, noo the truth's come out! Weel, iver since that night i' March, we's been meeghty good friends; and lile Katie has been wi' us a matter o' two or three days at a time; for nane o' th' neeghbours seemed

inclined to be friendly, as they had been;— for ye mind, ye'r sel, and ye'r father, and a' ye'r father-folk afore ye, had leaved i' th' dale and been respected; and ivery body blamed Christie. I sall niver forget, th' first Sunday at Christie went to kirk after ye were gane. Parson preached fra th' text, 'Let thy fatherless children trust i' me;' and a varra good sermon he made. Iverybody's eyes turned upo' Christie; and, sure enough, vexed as I was wi' him, I felt amaist sorry, he looked sae ashamed. And 'Why does iverybody point at ye sae, father?' says ane o' th' lile bairns at he had in his arms. Somebody as stood by i' th' kirk-garth (churchyard) heard it, and it got quite a byword and a proverb. 'Why does iverybody point at ye sae?' was said behind him, mony and mony a time at Sedbur' market and fair, till he was amaist afraid o' going out o's ain door."

"Poor Christie!" exclaimed Felix, with real emotion.

"Weel but," continued Mikky, "when th' news came three day's syne, Christie sent ane o' th' lads, to bid me gae o'er directly; sae I went, and there I fand 'em like crazy folk. 'Read that,' says Alice, geing me th' letters; but I had na my glasses wi' me, sae

I could na read 'em; and then Christie tried, but he greeted sae, because he said at he had been like a cruel stepfather to ye, that he could na; then Alice tried, but she's na hand at reading, and nane o' the lads could mae 'em out; sae I thought I must gae back again as I came; when in came th' Maister fro Dent-town school, and Christie gied 'em to him, telling him to read 'em out loud, for he cared na wha heard 'em. Th' Maister, and we a' greeted together, and then we a' shook hands round, we were sae glad; and then Alice brought out a bottle o' red wine at she'd had fro Sedbur,' to do her good, and we a' drank to ye'r happy return; and 'Ay yes,' says Alice, 'th' red wine 'ill do me good noo!' And sae we were varra merry. And th' Maister went and told iverybody, and they set Dent-town bells a-ringing: sae ye see ye're nae forgotten!"

"And poor Gideon!" said Felix, "you've said nothing about him."

"Ay, poor cretur," replied Mikky, "why, we gave him a glass o' red wine too, and told him ye were coming back again, and he fell to greeting and laughing all at aince, like a' th' rest o' us!—And they a' send their love to ye—I must na forget that," continued Mikky; "and Alice has sent ye half a dozen o'

new yarn stockings; they're i' my big-coat pocket; and Nelly o' Rivelin, as soon as she learned as I was coming, she sent ye a bag o' snaps; for, says she, 'He'll mappen like 'em for oud sake's sake,' and my oud woman has sent ye a gert red comforter, knit of a new sort o' woo' called German woo, at's varra warm and soft. They're a' i' my big-coat pocket, and ane o' those smart young fellows, at stand a' th' door, took my big-coat and put it somewhere."

"I must go and fetch it," said Felix, impatient to receive these evidences of his friends' good will.

"Noo, I niver thought," said Mikky, after the capacious pockets of the big-coat had been emptied, and Felix had duly admired all his presents; "I niver thought to ha' come to Lunnon i' my oud age. But Christie, poor man, I knaw na why, did na seem to like th' journey. I thought mappen as things had gone sae badly wi' him, he didna like th' expense; sae I offered to come up mysel and see ye, and a' ye'r kind friends, and just loose my tongue upo' that Maister Le Smith, who I should like to see i' Dent-town just at this minute!"

## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE STRANGER STILL IN LONDON.

**MIKKY HAWES** spent three very pleasant days in London, and saw what would furnish a twelvemonth's talk in the dales. Mrs. Waldegrave, who, the more she saw of him, liked him the better, hired a fly with a pair of stout horses, for one whole day, and sent him and Felix, accompanied by her own woman, Mrs. Moor, out sight-seeing.

They saw the Colosseum and the Zoological Gardens, and all the fine buildings about the Regent's Park. They drove down by Hyde Park, and saw St. James's and Buckingham Palaces, and had the great good luck to see the Princess Victoria—she was not Queen then—going with all her ladies and attendants in her beautiful coach, like another Cinderella, on a state visit to her uncle, King William, at St. James's Palace; then up by Charing Cross, and saw the bronze statues and the fine buildings there, and walked through the Exhibition, and the National Gallery—the old dales-man being far more amazed and dazzled by the gilt frames than by the pictures; and so along the Strand and through Temple Bar, and up Chancery Lane,



that Mikky Hawes might see where Felix had first the great happiness of being seen by Mrs. Waldegrave; and while they were there they went down Holborn, and up Shoe Lane, and even into Harp Alley, and past the Fleet Prison, where lay Mr. Le Smith. "I would na open th' door to set him free if I could," said the old man, indignantly, "for I knawd oud Joshua Gilsland at brought him up, to say nothing o' his villany to ye!" And from the Fleet Prison they drove to St. Paul's. It was well that Mrs. Moor was the most insatiable of sight-seeing people, London born and bred, and proud of her glorious old city, as who that has happily lived in it, is not?

After they had seen all the wonders of St. Paul's—whispering gallery and all—they saw the Mansion House, the Bank, the India House, and the Exchange—for it was not then burnt; and so, along Leadenhall Street and the Minories, to the Tower. Of course, very little time was allowed for seeing these several objects; but it was enough for Mikky to see the outside of many of them, and a very hasty walk through others sufficed. The Beef-eaters, and the Armoury, and the Traitor's Gate, and Tower-hill, where queens and great men had been beheaded, filled

him with wonder, and stamped the Tower of London on his mind for ever. This was the last sight they saw; and, the day wearing late, they drove straight away to Eaton Square, Mikky being, perhaps, as much amazed with what he called the "length of London," as with anything else.

The next day, Mikky Hawes returned to Dent-dale, but without Felix Law. Mrs. Waldegrave, in the main, believed Christie Swithenbank to be a very good kind of man, yet doubted whether it was altogether desirable that Felix should return to his guardianship. She would have preferred placing him with Mikky Hawes, but that was quite out of the question: such a pointed disrespect to Christie could not be thought of. Mrs. Waldegrave wished herself to become his guardian, in what manner we shall presently see: for this, the only thing wanting was Christie's consent. This scheme, full of benevolence as it was, was still furthered by Mr. Waldegrave.

"I like your young friend out of the north," said he to his wife that very morning; "I've had a deal of talk with him about the Yorkshire dales. He seems a fine intelligent fellow, and, I think, would do great credit to your Hampshire school. You have my full permission to do all for him which your kind

heart dictates. Mr. Serjeant Moile, too, speaks much in his favour."

In the afternoon, Mrs. Waldegrave had a long closetting with Mikky Hawes, in the Library, and, the old man approving of all her plans, Felix also was made acquainted with them; nothing, therefore, remained but to obtain Christie's consent to his going to school in Hampshire, under the auspices of Mrs. Waldegrave; and Mikky went to prepare for his journey, while she wrote to Christie, and Felix to Alice. Felix's letter was as follows:—

"DEAREST FRIEND,

"You don't know how surprised I was to see Mikky Hawes; he has made me very happy, by telling me that you are all friends; but I am very sorry you have been so poorly, and that Christie has had so many losses. I was rather disappointed when I found I was not going back to Gibb's Ha', for I love you very much; I think I could be very useful to you. But I am to go to Mrs. Waldegrave's school in Hampshire, if Christie has no objection. It will only cost £10 a-year, besides my clothes; and the rest of my money may be put out to interest, Mrs. Waldegrave says. I hope I shall go there, for Mrs. Moor has told me a great deal about the school,

and I think I shall learn a many things which will be useful to me. Mrs. Moor is Mrs. Waldegrave's maid, and has a nice room of her own by Mrs. Waldegrave's dressing-room; and there I sit, while she does her sewing, and sometimes I read to her, and sometimes I knit. Do you know, everybody is so surprised at my knitting! I am going to knit some lamb's-wool stockings for Mr. Waldegrave, when I have done those for Mrs. Moor. He will be very much pleased. Everybody is very kind to me. If you did not receive a long letter I wrote to you when I first came to London, you never heard of Mrs. Rundy. She was Mrs. Le Smith's aunt, and in her house she died. Mrs. Rundy was very kind to me, and there little Julia still is; and I should have been there too, only for Mrs. Moor; for she said she could make me up a little bed in a closet near her room, and that I should be in nobody's way, but should sit in her room in the day. And so I am here, which is a great deal pleasanter than being in Holborn. Mrs. Waldegrave says, if I behave well—and I am sure I shall try to do so—I shall go to see you, for two months, some summer when they go to the Lakes, which they do sometimes. She has given me the lace which I now send for a cap for you, and that is real lace for the

## 204 THE STRANGER STILL IN LONDON.

border, and some white ribbon too; and the merino is for a frock for Katie. If I had some money of my own, I would send Ralph something. Tell Gideon I have got his stick, for when my best clothes were stole, they left it. Mikky Hawes will tell you what a deal of London we have seen.

"I am come to the end of my paper, and I wonder how I could forget to thank you for the stockings. Elsy Hawes sent me a nice red comforter, and Nelly o' Rivelin a bag of snaps.

"Give my dear love to all, and to Christie. I am, my dearest friend, your very affectionate

"FELIX LAW."

Feb. 1, 183—

---

## CHAPTER XX.

### A VISIT.

FEBRUARY wore on, and so did March and April, and it was now the beginning of May; and Mr. Waldegrave had been luxuriating in lamb's-wool stockings of Felix's knitting for two months. A very touching letter, full of humility and gratitude, had been received from Christie, giving his free consent to any

plans which Mrs. Waldegrave might have formed for his ward. Everything seemed prospering; and Felix retained not only the undiminished regard of Mr. and Mrs. Waldegrave, but of Mrs. Moor also.

"That little friend of yours, Julia Le Smith," said Mrs. Waldegrave to Felix, one day about this time, "is in a very deplorable state. Mrs. Moor saw her a few days ago, and she and I have been forming a little plan by which her life may be rendered more pleasant, if not altogether saved."

Felix wished, as he had often done before, that he might kiss the hem of Mrs. Waldegrave's garment; but he only expressed his pleasure and gratitude by words.

"Oh!" said she, smiling at what she thought very enthusiastic language, Mrs. Rundy must have a part of the credit, for it costs her money. My share is very small—merely to propose it, and take the child there; for she is to go into the country to be brought up. But I thought it would please you to leave her with a chance of health and comfort, before you go into Hampshire." Again Felix thought how good she was.

"Julia's new home," continued she, "is near Hampton Court Palace, where I will also take you; but you must carefully read

the reign of Henry VIII. in your Markham. We shall go to-morrow; so that you must be diligent to-day."

The next morning Mrs. Rundy, with the child neatly dressed in its new mourning, and its little wardrobe carefully packed in a new hair trunk, was driven in her baker's cart to the great house in Eaton Square. The neighbours' servants, looking upwards through the area-windows, thought Mrs. Waldegrave was a very strange lady, for queer-looking old country-men, and tradespeople in their carts, drove up to the door and were received in the lady's own room, by the lady herself. But no wonder! she had picked up a beggar-boy somewhere in the city, and, it was said, was going to make a great gentleman of him—so, what could be expected! And now there's a child and a box come with a fat woman in a baker's cart; and the next thing will be, that they all will be going out with my lady in the carriage. They were not quite right in this last surmise, for the fat woman was driven away again in the baker's cart; but sure enough, an hour afterwards, the carriage came to the door—the new britschka—and in got Mrs. Waldegrave, and the little "beggar-boy," handsomely dressed—and a very good-looking boy he was;

and in got Mrs. Moor; and then one of the housemaids brought out the child which had come in the baker's cart, which she gave into Mrs. Moor's arms; and then the little hair trunk was stowed away by the footman somewhere, who afterwards took his seat behind, and away they drove!

As they passed along the splendid streets and squares of the west-end, Felix thought of the time when he had been a miserable dweller in Harp Alley and Shoe Lane, and had looked at the glittering carriages full of their gay and happy people; and now, when he saw such as himself had been, with their shoes kept on their feet by the most comfortless contrivances, and in garments which indicated doleful poverty, a thanksgiving for himself almost found utterance, while a secret prayer was in his heart, that, though man might not befriend, yet that God would never forget the poor.

Little Julia, who had been overjoyed to meet with Felix, was permitted to sit between him and Mrs. Moor, on the back seat, and have the great pleasure of putting her hand into his; while Mrs. Waldegrave, looking at the feeble, meagre little invalid, and the happy boy before her, felt a pleasure which kings and queens, in the mere possession of royalty, might envy. •



"Oh how delicious this is!" exclaimed Felix, as he looked round upon the open extent of Wimbledon Common, now golden with the early blossom of the gorse. "Look, Julia, what beautiful flowers!"

It was a pleasant thing indeed, to be driving abroad on such a fine morning, with the larks singing overhead, and the thrushes and blackbirds in the wayside plantations! Felix's heart leapt with joy, for he had been more than two years a dweller in close alleys, and had almost forgotten how beautiful a May morning in the country really is. He looked on either hand at the noble trees, the park-like fields, and the elegant houses placed in quick succession among them, and then beheld the noble view from Kingston-hill; and his own beloved dale-country almost dimmed by comparison.

So they drove on through Kingston, and in half an hour more they were on Ditton Marsh, where lived Nurse Day, the old woman for whose cottage they were bound.

It was a white and remarkably clean cottage; but, what was the most singular feature about it, was the number of children playing around the door, and on the common before it. Poor little things! Some of them were lame, and went on crutches; some were ricketty, and were creeping about with their

thin limbs and swollen joints; most of them were pale and sickly-looking; yet, amongst them were striking exceptions—fine, hale children, with wild hair, and large, merry eyes, the pictures of animal life and glee.

“Poor little dear!” said Nurse Day, taking Julia Le Smith on her knee, “I see what’s amiss with her! The very inside’s burnt out with that poisonous gin! Why, ma’am, I’ve never a drop of gin in my house, nor Godfrey’s either! Good air and exercise, and plenty of good food and cleanliness—that’s my maxim! Mothers has a deal to answer for as uses gin!”

Felix whispered, that poor Julia’s mother was dead.

“Bless your thoughtful heart!” said the old woman; and she called her daughter. “Here, Mary, carry her out and show her the lambs! Children as comes out of London are always taken with the lambs, poor things! say nothing of the daisies—for, bless you, my children sit playing with daisies by the hour.”

Mrs. Waldegrave remarked upon the assemblage of little crippled objects that were seen playing about the door.

“Poor things!” returned the good old nurse, “you see, none of those five have

been with me above a month. Parents send their children out as spring comes on; and yet, they are all better than when they came. That little girl, walking by the paling, could not bear her own weight when she came; her father's a boot-last maker, in Huggin Lane; and that poor dear with the crutches—she'll always be a cripple—when she came, one could not hear her speak across the room; and yet, she's a happy little soul! Her parents, ma'am, are bakers in Thames Street."

"That's a fine little fellow, with the white curls!" remarked Mrs. Waldegrave.

"And yet, ma'am," returned the old nurse, "that child, two years ago, was worse to look at than this you've brought. His father, poor dear, made away with himself, and his mother went out of her mind, and he was put out to nurse; and when he came to me, he was four years old, but was no more than a case of bones! No, ma'am, children want nothing but plenty of wholesome food, exercise, and cleanliness; and, please God, we'll soon make an alteration in this little July."

Mrs. Waldegrave did not doubt but all would be done for her that was possible, for a kinder, happier countenance she had never

seen. And, all needful arrangements having been made respecting money-matters, Mrs. Waldegrave proposed that they should drive away, although Felix had not kissed nor said good bye to the child.

They returned, as had been proposed, by Hampton Court, and spent three hours in that fine old palace, and in walking about its gardens; and, in the balmy sunlight of that sweet May evening, drove back to town by Richmond.

Three weeks after this time, the following letter was read to the household at Gibb's Ha' assembled; Mikky and Elsy Hawes being among them:—

" Ashenham, Hampshire,  
June 6, 183—.

" MY DEAREST FRIEND,

" Mrs. Waldegrave has given me permission to write to you, as she thinks you and Christie will like to hear all about me, and where I am. We came here last Thursday. We were two days in coming from London; I came with the butler, and Mrs. Devonshire the cook, and a young woman who is going to help as seamstress; Mrs. Moer, and Isaac the valet, going with Mr. and Mrs. Waldegrave's carriage. The butler is an old man, with very white hair, and looks quite like a gentleman; he knows a great deal, for he has

lived in the family fifty years, and Mrs. Devonshire twenty; so I could just speak all I feel to them about dear Mrs. Waldegrave.

"Ashenham House is a very grand place, very like a castle. It stands in a park with deer in, and there is a lake with boats upon it; and, from a high mound in the park, we can see the sea. I don't live at Ashenham House, however, but at the school, which is at the bottom of the park. I wish I could give you an idea of this school, for it is all Mrs. Waldegrave's own contriving. But I will try. Well, at the bottom of the park, opening out of it by an iron-gate, are some pleasant fields; these belong to the school. The school is four cottages, covered with myrtles and roses. The master and mistress live in one: their name is Hill. They love Mrs. Waldegrave nearly as much as I do. One of the cottages is the school-room, and the other two are eating and bed-rooms, for there are ten boarders beside me; eight out of the ten are orphans; and two of them are reckoned wonderfully clever, yet they are all poor boys; the eldest, who is fifteen, helps to teach the others. But somehow it all seems like play. They learn astronomy, and music, and dancing; and study maps, and read and write, and cipher, just as easily as they play at marbles. I never thought learn-

ing was so easy; but the master never is angry, nor the mistress either; there is neither rod nor cane in the school, and somehow they don't seem wanted; and I think the reason is, that everybody loves Mrs. Waldegrave so much.

"Besides the boarders, there are fifty day scholars, boys and girls from the village; and we have all of us gardens: each one is as big as that before the house at Gibb's Ha.' We have gardening-books in the school, and we go by them, so that it is *real* gardening; and to-day we had a sallad at dinner—a great, big sallad from the boys' gardens. They are allowed to sell the produce, if they please, but they must keep an exact account of all they buy and sell, in a little book.

"Dearest Alice, you that love flowers so, would be delighted to see these gardens, they are so beautiful. Mrs. Waldegrave gives those that are very good, flower-seeds for rewards; and if any boy were ever to behave ill, for a long time, his garden would be taken from him.

"I wish you and Christie could hear us singing at night. There are always prayers in a morning, and a chapter in the New Testament read at night, and then we all sing a hymn, and afterwards practise music. They practise very fine music, and the gentlemen

and ladies who visit at the Hall often come down to hear it. This place seems to me like a little heaven on earth, and my heart is filled with love to everybody and everything. There is a little boy here named Henry Warden, that I like best of all; he feels just as I do, and we go and sit in an arbour that there is in the garden, and I tell him all about you; and he told me once about the time before he came here. He belonged to an old woman in London who had a mangle, but he does not think she was his relation: she was very cruel to him, and he was worse off even than I was, when dear Mrs. Waldegrave found him. He is but eleven now, and has been here two years. Oh, how he loves her! and he takes her a nosegay from his garden every Saturday. All last winter he never missed once, and he grew violets under a glass for her.

“ There are two cows at the school, and we are expected to look after them, and so we do; and the gentlemen who come to the school always admire the cows. We make baskets, and do joiner’s work; and mend our own clothes; and help to mangle, and draw water, and do almost everything;—for it is reckoned one of our chief duties to learn to be useful. We have a printing-press, and one of the boys, who left the school last year,

is now with a printer in Exeter; another is gone to teach in a school like this, near London. One of our boys binds books; he bound some, most beautifully, for Mrs. Waldegrave's own library. I am to teach them how to knit; and it would make you laugh to see all the "pricks" and the yarn that is bought, and what a many scholars I shall have!

"We work out of doors three hours every day, and if we have nothing to do in our own fields we work on the farm. You never saw such fields, for there is not a stone in them! I shall learn to be a very good farmer before I come back to you. I think I have told you all I can think of about the school, but I never can tell you how happy we are!

"I have written a very long letter, because Mrs. Waldegrave said I was to have a frank. I forgot to tell you that the twenty pounds came safe. Mrs. Moor buys my clothes, but I keep the account, which I am to show Mrs. Waldegrave every half year.

"Give my love to dear Mikky and Elsy Hawes: I am so glad you like them! My love to Christie, and all the rest; tell Gideon I still have his stick, and I call it 'my Gideon.' And so, my dearest friend, I am your affectionate

"FELIX LAW."



It was two summers after this letter was written, in the month of August, that a travelling-carriage drove up to the King's Arms, Kendal; and, the night before, a shandry—the very same which had been broken at the bridge in Dent-dale—had driven also to an inn of less note in the same town. The driver of this shandry, being no other than our old friend, Christie o' Gibb's Ha,' at eleven o'clock in the morning took his stand in the street, just by the King's Arms, awaiting the arrival of the travelling carriage aforesaid! Christie had not waited long, when he saw a carriage and four horses coming up the street at a dashing rate. There were two men servants sitting before, and a well-dressed woman and a fine youth sitting in the rumble behind.

"I should na wonder if this is Lord Lowther or mappen th' Duke o' Northumberland himsel!" thought Christie, as the carriage drove up. It seemed to him prodigiously grand; and he glanced inside to see if a lord or a duke looked like other men, when the youth who sate behind said, in a low but clear voice of delight, "There's Christie o' Gibb's Ha'!"

Very dull indeed must Christie have been, to wonder, as he glanced up at the boy, who

was rapidly dismounting, how one belonging to such grand folks should know him; nor was it till he had grasped hold of his hand with an energy of joy, that it occurred to him that this was Felix; and these, then, were the Waldegraves! Poor Christie, he all at once seemed a very small man in his own eyes! Felix had grown tall, and had quite another look, than that he wore, five years before. But half a minute restored his identity.

"It's ye, sure enough!" said Christie, "but how ye's grown!"

They were only going to change horses here; and here Felix was to leave them for the two months' visit to his friends; so, drawing Christie towards the open carriage door, where the landlady stood offering wine and biscuits, he said that Christie o' Gibb's Ha' was waiting. Christie made his very best and lowest bow, and both Mr. and Mrs. Waldegrave spoke kindly to him.

"I hope you think Felix improved," said the latter.

"I did na know him, not I," returned Christie; "he's amaisht grown a man!"

"And how's your wife and family?" asked she.

"A' varra weel, I's much obleeged to ye; and a' waiting, wi' blithe hearts, to see our

young maister here," returned he, not venturing to call Felix "a bairn."

Felix's luggage was unstrapped, and Mrs. Waldegrave put forth her hand to bid him and Christie good-bye. "I shall come over and see you," said she, after the carriage door was closed. Felix looked a very happy and grateful reply; and then, nodding merrily to Mrs. Moor, as they drove off, and introducing Christie to her, in dumb show, they turned towards the small but handsome portmanteau that contained his wardrobe.

Christie had never acquitted himself so little to his own satisfaction—he was so taken by surprise; the equipage was so much grander than he had expected, that, though he would have liked to have said a world of grateful things, he felt as if he could not open his mouth. In an hour's time, however, when he had taken his seat in the shandry, and was driving his stout brown horse at the rate of six miles an hour, he had tolerably recovered his equanimity, especially as Felix, although he was so grown, and looked so handsome, and so like a gentleman's "bairn," was as merry, and as full of affection to all his old friends, as he had ever been.

Oh what a happy coming back that was! He passed Willy Parrington's door, and was

not even cast down by the remembrance of the last time he was there; and then, all through the Swiss-like Dent-town they drove, he wondering, the while, how it was that everything looked so small, and, he was sorry to confess it, so mean. He was quite afraid the very fells would be diminished, and the gills be less beautiful. At length they reached the bridge that crossed the beck, and turned to Gibb's Ha'.

"I think I could run faster than you can drive!" said Felix, growing very impatient; "I'm sure I can!" and he jumped out, without waiting for Christie to stop, and reached the garden gate about a minute and a half before the shandry.

"Oh my bairn!" exclaimed Alice, rushing to meet him, and, without remarking how much he was changed, clasped him to her bosom, and kissed him with unbounded affection! Tommy, and Ralph, and Katie, and the other two, had rushed out also, but they saw the change instantly, and, feeling abashed, hung back.

"How ye's grown!" said Alice, the next moment, looking at him through tears, "and what a nice colour ye's got, and how smooth ye'r hair is! Oh my poor bairn! ye wer'na mair welcome to ye'r ain mother, than ye are to me! May God Almighty bless ye!"

Felix's meeting with this affectionate woman had not been without tears, and, in the secret of his heart, he thanked God, who had thus restored him to the land of his fathers, and besought a blessing upon her and her household.

That was indeed a happy evening! and, no sooner had he kissed Katie, and shook hands with the boys, when in bounded the old dog, whining and twisting about his body, in an ecstasy of recognition; and then came in poor Gideon, as child-like as ever, eager to shake hands and display his smart old neckerchief: and, while yet they were all laughing and talking together, Tommy exclaimed that "Mikky and Elsy Hawes were a-coming!"

"Na doubt on't," replied Alice; "we sall hae a full fireside to neeght. I knaw of at least a dozen as is coming; but I's got plenty to eat and drink; for if a fine feast were made to honour a disobedient bairn, should na we mae a yet finer feast when ane like our Felix comes back to us!"

THE END.









